The Muslim Family -3

# The رفقاً بالقوارير
# Fragile Vessels

## Rights and Obligations Between the Spouses in Islām

*Revised Edition*

محمد بن مصطفى الجبالي

Muhammad Mustafā al-Jibāly

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Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing

«رفقاً بالقوارير»

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ،
فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا
وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۝﴾

النساء ١٩

*«Live with them (your wives) in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which Allāh has placed much good.»*

[*An-Nisā'* 4:19]

الأسرة المسلمة

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## RIGHTS & OBLIGATIONS BETWEEN THE SPOUSES IN ISLĀM

*Revised Edition*

مُحَمَّد مُصْطَفىٰ ٱلْجِبَالِي

**MUḤAMMAD MUSTAFĀ AL-JIBĀLĪ**

مَنْشُورَاتُ ٱلْكِتَابِ وَٱلسُّنَّة

***AL-KITAAB & AS-SUNNAH PUBLISHING***

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*The Fragile Vessels*
*Rights & Obligations between the Spouses in Islām*
*(The Muslim Family – 3)*
Revised Edition

26+164 p. 24 × 18 cm
ISBN 1-891229-53-2

Cover Design: ʿAbdullāh al-Jibālī

**Published by:**
*Al-Kitāb & as-Sunnah* Publishing
USA: P.O. Box 2542, Arlington, Texas, 76004
Lebanon: Beirut, Tel: 961-3-046-338
Saudi Arabia: P.O. Box 5683, Madinah,
Tel: 966-50-960-0572, Fax: 966-4-846-6002
Web: www.kspublications.com
Email: info@kspublications.com

**Printed by:**
*Al-Maktab al-Islāmī*
P.O. Box 11/3771, Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 961-5-456-280, Fax: 961-5-450-657
Web: www.almaktab-alislami.com
Email: islamic_of@almaktab-alislami.com

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# PRELUDE

## Opening Sermon

إِنَّ ٱلْحَمْدَ للهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ ونَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ ٱللهُ فَلاَ مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلاَ هَادِيَ لَهُ.

*Al-ḥamdu lillāh.* Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from our souls' evils and our wrong doings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَـٰهَ إِلاَّ ٱللهُ، وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّداً عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allāh — alone without a partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His *'abd* (servant) and messenger.

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ، وَلاَ تَمُوتُنَّ إِلاَّ وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ۝﴾ آل عمران ١٠٢

**«O you who believe! Revere Allāh the right reverence, and do not die except as Muslims.»** [1]

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ، وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالاً كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً، وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللهَ ٱلَّذِي تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ ٱللهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا۝﴾ النساء ١

**«O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women.**

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:102.

**Revere Allāh through whom you demand things from one another, and (cherish the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever-Watchful over you.»** [1]

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُواْ قَوْلاً سَدِيدًا ۝ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَـٰلَكُمْ، وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ، وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۝﴾ الأحزاب ٧٠-٧١

**«O you who believe! Revere Allāh and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.»** [2, 3]

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فإِنَّ خَيْرَ ٱلْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ ٱللهِ،
وَخَيْرَ الهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ)، وَشَرَّ الأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا،
وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي ٱلنَّارِ.

Indeed, the best speech is Allāh's (ﷻ) Book and the best guidance is Muḥammad's (ﷺ) guidance. The worst affairs (of religion) are those innovated (by people), for every such innovation is an act of misguidance leading to the Fire. [4]

## Our Mission: Purification and Cultivation

Our goal is to promote true Islām that derives from Allāh's (ﷻ) Book, His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah, and the *ṣaḥābah*'s (ﷺ) understanding.

---

1 *An-Nisā'* 4:1.

2 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:70-71.

3 This opening text is called *Khuṭbat ul-Ḥājah* (the Sermon of Need). Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others recorded from Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, and other companions (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) often started his speeches with this sermon.

4 Muslim and others recorded from Jābir (ﷺ) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) also started his speeches with this paragraph., of which the last statement, recorded only by an-Nasā'ī, is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 137).

Over the centuries, Muslims have largely drifted away from the magnificent Path that incorporates correct Islāmic beliefs and practices. This makes it imperative to guide them back to the Path, and to help them live by its dictates.

Therefore, any serious work in promoting Islām must involve two fundamental components: purification and cultivation. Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that these two components were central to the Prophet's (ﷺ) message:

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي ٱلأُمِّيِّـۧنَ رَسُولاً مِّنْهُمْ، يَتْلُواْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ، وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ، وَإِن كَانُواْ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَـٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ۝﴾ الجمعة ٢

**«It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His *āyāt,* purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom — although they previously were in clear deviation.»** [1]

Our mission, then, is to present purified Islāmic teachings and practical guidelines for implementing them.

This book is a humble response to our realization of a great responsibility: the responsibility to bring forth before the English-speaking public writings that refine Islām and present it pure and simple, as close as possible to the way it was understood and practiced by its early righteous pioneers — the *salaf.*

We call upon all Muslims to support us in carrying out this noble trust. This will surely elevate and honor us and spread the eternal message of Islām all over the earth, as Allāh promises:

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ۝﴾ الصف ٩

**«It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, in order to make it**

1 *Al-Jumuʿah* 62:2.

**prevail over all (false) religions, however hateful this may be to pagans.»** [1]

In what follows, we give additional detail concerning purification and cultivation.

## 1. Purification

Purification (or *taṣfiyah*) is required in regard to the sources of our Islāmic knowledge, and in regard to our Islāmic beliefs and practices.

### A) Purifying Our Sources of Knowledge

Wrong beliefs and practices deriving from weak reports have marred the beauty of Islām and prevented the Muslims' advancement. Therefore, we must purify our knowledge from weak and fabricated narrations. This is an essential task that must precede any action, because good actions can only be based on a solid foundation that may be traced back to Allāh's authentic revelation.

Praising those who strive in purifying the Islāmic knowledge, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يحمل هذا العلمَ من كل خلف عدوله، ينفون عنه
تحريفَ الغالين، وٱنتحالَ المبطلين، وتأويلَ الجاهلين.»

**‹This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy individuals from every generation — they will expel from it the alterations made by the excessive, the falsehoods of the liars, and the misinterpretations of the ignorant.›** [2]

---

1 *Aṣ-Ṣaff* 61:9.

2 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī, Ibn ʿAdiyy, and others from Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Masʿūd, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم). It is verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Mishkāt ul-Maṣābīḥ* no. 239).

### B) Purifying Our Beliefs

Beliefs of the Muslim masses have become contaminated with dogmas coming from sources alien to Islām. Therefore, part of the necessary purification process is to purify our beliefs so that they are only based on authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, in compliance with the beliefs of the *ṣaḥābah*, and clean from any form of *shirk* (joining partners with Allāh). Allāh praised the *ṣaḥābah*'s beliefs by saying:

﴿فَإِنْ ءَامَنُواْ بِمِثْلِ مَآ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَواْ﴾ البقرة ١٣٧

**«So if they believe as you (O Prophet's companions) believe, they are indeed truly guided.»** [1]

### C) Purifying Our Actions

We should also purify our actions so that they conform with authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, compliant with the understanding and practice of the *ṣaḥābah*, and clean from human innovation (or *bid'ah*). This is the only acceptable path of guidance, as Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ،
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ، نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ، وَنُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ،
وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ١١٥

**«If a person opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the path of the believers [2], We will give him what (consequence) he chose and admit him into Hell — what an evil destination!»** [3]

---

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:137.

2 The description "believers" here applies primarily to the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم).

3 *An-Nisā'* 4:115.

## 2. Cultivation

Cultivation (or *tarbiyah*) is to establish our beliefs and actions upon the purified knowledge. Cultivation goes hand-in-hand with purification.

### A) Becoming True Followers of the *Salaf*

The above discussion about purifying our beliefs and actions must extend to cultivating ourselves and our communities upon the purified teachings. If we do this, we can hope to be true followers of our great *salaf* — the *ṣaḥābah* (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) praises both in the following:

﴿وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَٰنٍ رَّضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ۝﴾ التوبة ١٠٠

**«The first to embrace Islām among the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*, and also those who follow them in the best way, Allāh is pleased with them and they with Him. He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, and in which they will abide eternally. This is the supreme success.»** [1]

This cultivation should bring back to Muslims the spirit of truth-seeking — instead of stubborn and narrow-minded adherence to *mathhab*s (sects) and prejudiced loyalty to parties.

### B) Inviting to the Pure Religion

We should educate and guide the Muslims toward the purified Islām, so as to implement its teachings and revel in its virtues and ethics. We should also invite the non-Muslims to the unadulterated truth of Islām.

Promoting this blessed guidance is a duty that every Muslim should cherish and support. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

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1 *At-Tawbah* 9:100.

﴿وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ، وَأُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ۝﴾ آل عمران ١٠٤

**«Let there arise from you (Muslims) a nation who invites to good, enjoins right, and forbids wrong, for those are the successful.»** [1]

This is an obligation on every Muslim according to his ability, as Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلْبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقْوَىٰ، وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ﴾ المائدة ٢

**«Help one another in righteousness and piety; and do not help one another in sinning and transgression.»** [2]

This is the only way to attain Allāh's acceptance and achieve happiness and success. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَٱلْعَصْرِ۝ إِنَّ ٱلإِنسَـٰنَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ۝ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْاْ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْاْ بِٱلصَّبْرِ۝﴾ العصر ١-٣

**«By time, a human being is surely in loss, except for those who believe, do righteous deeds, mutually enjoin the truth, and mutually enjoin perseverance.»** [3]

And this is the way to establish true and honest compassion among Allāh's servants — compassion emanating from a strong unifying cause. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَٱعْتَصِمُواْ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُواْ﴾ آل عمران ١٠٣

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1 *Āl ʿImrān* 3:104.

2 *Al-Māʾidah* 5:2.

3 *Al-ʿAṣr* 103:1-3.

**«And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh, and be not divided among yourselves.»** [1]

#### C) PRESENTING THE ISLĀMIC SOLUTION

Inviting to the Truth includes providing realistic Islāmic solutions to contemporary problems. There is no doubt that Allāh's guidance is the only comprehensive way to resolving people's problems at the individual and communal levels. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَأَنِ ٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ، وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ.﴾ المائدة ٤٩

**«Judge between them according to what Allāh has revealed, and do not follow their errant views.»** [2]

## Technicalities

#### TRANSLITERATION

We make a serious attempt to limit the use of transliterated Arabic terms to the following two situations:

- When we do not find an English expression that can reflect the same meaning as the original term.

- When we feel that the Arabic term is of such importance that it is essential to familiarize the readers with it.

At the end of this book, we have included a glossary defining common Arabic terms that fulfill the above criteria. In addition, we have included an index of the Arabic terms that are more pertinent to this current work, indicating the page on which they have been defined.

Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italic*ized. In general, the rules of English pronunciation can be applied. The

1 *Āl ʿImrān* 3:103.

2 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:49.

following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

| Symbol | Stands for | English Equivalent Sounds |
|---|---|---|
| ā, Ā | (ا) *Alif* (long vowel a) | Mostly: Man, sad. At times: Father, hard, god. |
| ū, Ū | (و) *Wāw* (long vowel u) | Root, soup, flute. |
| ī, Ī | (ي) *Yā* (long vowel i) | Seed, lean, piece, receive. |
| ʾ | (ء) *Hamzah* | The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: at, it or oh. |
| Th, th | (ث) *Thā* | Three, moth. |
| Ḥ, ḥ | (ح) *Ḥā* | No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below "h". It somewhat resembles the "h" in "ahem". |
| Kh, kh | (خ) *Khā* | No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat. |
| Th, th | (ذ) *Thāl* | There, mother. |
| Ṣ, ṣ | (ص) *Ṣād* | A deeper "s" sound. Somewhat close to the "sc" in "muscle". |
| Ḍ, ḍ | (ض) *Ḍād* | Sounds deeper than a "d". Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof, with the sides of the tongue pressed against the top molars. |
| Ṭ, ṭ | (ط) *Ṭah* | Similar but deeper than a "t". |
| Ẓ, ẓ | (ظ) *Ẓah* | A deeper *thāl*, produced by touching the backside of the tongue to the tip of the upper front teeth. |
| ʿ | (ع) *ʿAyn* | Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath "ḥ". |

| Symbol | Stands for | English Equivalent Sounds |
|---|---|---|
| Gh, gh | (غ) *Ghayn* | A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the *khā'*. Similar to the "R" in some French accents. |
| Q, q | (ق) *Qāf* | Somewhat similar to the "c" in "coffee". |

#### TRANSLATING AND REFERENCING QUR'ĀN AND *ḤADĪTH*

The Qur'ān contains Allāh's exact words that cannot be precisely translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretation and limited human understanding. Our approach, therefore, is to translate the meanings as understood by trustworthy Islāmic scholars. When citing Qur'ān, we present the Arabic text, followed, between double angle quotation marks (« »), by the English meaning in **boldface**. This is then followed by a footnote specifying the *sūrah*'s name and number, and the number(s) of the *āyah*(s) cited.

Similarly, when citing a *ḥadīth*, the Arabic text for the Prophet's (ﷺ) words is presented, followed by its meaning, in **boldface**, between single angle quotation marks (‹ ›). If the *ḥadīth* contains a supplication or exaltation, we generally also include a full transliteration of its text. This is followed by a footnote specifying the *ḥadīth*'s location in the compilations of *ḥadīth*s. A *ḥadīth* recorded by al-Bukhārī or Muslim is automatically considered authentic. Otherwise, the footnote would usually indicate its degree of authenticity as verified by the *'allāmah* Muḥammad Nāṣir ud-Dīn al-Albānī (رحمه الله), and a reference to the works where he made such a verification.

#### NOTABLE UTTERANCES

Out of love, appreciation, gratitude and other noble feelings, a Muslim is encouraged to utter certain phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, the angels, the *ṣaḥābah*, or other righteous Muslims. We present these phrases in condensed Arabic calligraphy as follows:

| Phrase | Mentioned with | Transliteration | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| ﷻ | Allāh's Name | *Subḥānahū wa taʿālā.* | He is exalted above weakness and indignity. |
| ﷻ | Allāh's Name | *ʿAzza wa-jal.* | He is exalted and glorified. |
| ﷻ | Allāh's Name | *Jalla jalāluh.* | Exalted is His glory. |
| ﷺ | Muḥammad and other prophets | *Ṣalla 'Llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* [1]. | May Allāh's peace and praise be on him. |
| ﷺ | Prophets and angels | *ʿAlayh is-Salām.* | Peace be on him. |
| ﷺ | A male companion | *Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhu.* | May Allāh be pleased with him. |
| ﷺ | A female companion | *Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhā.* | May Allāh be pleased with her. |
| ﷺ | Two companions | *Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhumā.* | May Allāh be pleased with them. |
| ﷺ | More than two companions | *Raḍiya 'Llāhu ʿanhum.* | May Allāh be pleased with them. |
| ﷺ | A past scholar or righteous Muslim. | *Raḥimahu 'Llāh.* | May Allāh have mercy on him. |

When coming across any of these symbols, the reader is urged to

1 Uttering this is sometimes described as, "saying *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger".

utter the complete phrase in order to obtain the reward of saying the appropriate *th*ikr or *du'ā'*.

# PREFACE

## The Muslim Family

"The Muslim Family" is a series of books that presents detailed discussions relating to the family life, starting with courting and marriage, and extending into raising children according to Islām. To-date, this series consists of the following titles:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **" The Quest for Love & Mercy"**<br>Regulations for Marriage & Wedding in Islām | ﴿وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً﴾ |
| 2 | **"Closer than a Garment"**<br>Marital Intimacy According to the Pure Sunnah | ﴿هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ، وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ.﴾ |
| 3 | **"The Fragile Vessels"**<br>Rights and Obligations between the Spouses in Islām | «رفقاً بالقوارير» |
| 4 | **Our Precious Sprouts**<br>Islāmic Regulations for Newborns | أفلاذُ أكبادنا |

The first three parts of this series, including this current book, deal with various aspects of marriage.

Marriage holds a position of perpetual significance because of the central role it plays in the human life. It is not surprising, therefore, that the scholars of Islām have discussed it in extensive writings through the ages.

Under the contemporary influence of non-Islāmic cultures, many misconceptions have been introduced into various areas of Islām — spilling into issues of marriage, divorce, and other family-related matters.

Viewing the needs and concerns of the Muslims who are forced to live in such alien environments, we find that most Islāmic writings on marriage are restricted in scope — having been written for different cultures and backgrounds.

This leaves quite a large gap that needs to be filled for the benefit of the English-speaking Muslims — which is what we attempt to fulfill in this 3-book set that covers various aspects of marriage according to the authentic Sunnah:

The first book discusses the importance and advantages of marriage, selecting a spouse, the courting process, the marriage contract, the wedding celebration, the *walīmah*, and forbidden marriages. It provides a practical procedure for performing the marriage contract and includes a model marriage certificate.

The second book discusses the proper etiquettes of marital intimacy, forbidden acts of intimacy, the perils of *zinā*, and birth control. It answers many frequently-asked questions about various acts of intimacy.

The third book discusses the rights and obligations of the two spouses. It includes brief biographies of the Mothers of the Believers, realistic pictures from the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) with his wives, and a complete discussion of the *ḥadīth* of Umm Zar'.

This series deals with marriage and other family issues in a practical approach, taking advantage of the author's years of experience in the field of marriage and counseling. Each book serves as a complete handbook within its scope — providing reliable knowledge based on authentic evidence from Allāh's Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah.

## This Book

This is the third book in "the Muslim Family" series. It mostly deals with the rights and obligations of the two spouses. However, as its title may suggest, it attempts to be supportive of the women's side. Among the reasons for this are the following:

1. In the absence of true Islāmic justice, women have often been abused and mistreated by their husbands — sometimes in the name

of Islām, and through the misuse of authentic texts from the Sunnah. Thus, we make an effort to remove misconceptions from such texts.

2. Many of the books that have been published in English about the Muslim woman's rights and obligations emphasize the importance of her full obedience and submission to her husband — thereby neglecting the equally important obligations of the husband in the family structure. Therefore, we try to present a more balanced view of the rights and obligations of each side.

3. The picture that has been painted for the "model Muslim woman" is too idealistic and, sometimes, frustrating. By citing numerous examples from the lives of the Mothers of the Believers, we hope to present practical and realistic examples to which our female readers can relate.

The first edition of this book was published five years ago (June 2005). While keeping the same content as the original edition, this "revised edition" contains the following main enhancements:

- It corrects many typing errors, both in the Arabic and English texts.
- It improves the style and structure of many sentences and paragraphs.
- It replaces the original "Prelude" and "Arabic Terms" with improved versions.
- The cover's color-scheme and other art-work have been modified.

## Acknowledgement

All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) who facilitated the completion of this work. May He further reward all the Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways. In particular, may Allāh (ﷻ) reward my *shaykh* and teacher, Muḥammad Nāṣir ud-Dīn

al-Albānī whose works have benefited us in ways beyond description, my son ʿAbdullāh who designed the original cover, and my daughters who proofread the manuscript and provided valuable suggestions.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and profitable to the Muslims, forgive our shortcomings, purify our work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from us.

Our Lord, forgive us and all of the believers, and bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

*Muhammad Mustafa al-Jibali*
Beirut
Tuesday, 28 *Jumāda Ākhirah* 1426
2 August 2005

# CHAPTER 1

# A FAIR PARTNERSHIP

## Introduction

### AN ESSENTIAL BOND

Marriage is a bond held together by mutual rights and responsibilities for each of the two spouses. It is a partnership between them, and they are both required to play an active role in that partnership.

The man is appointed as the leader of the household, and the woman as the supportive helper whose expertise in many areas cannot be handled by the man. Some of the women who have been corrupted by the Western ideologies want to be leaders of the family. But only chaos would reult in such a family where the correct and natural positions are reversed.

Both the husband and wife have certain rights and duties. A happy and successful marriage is assured if both of them fulfill their duties and preserve each others' rights. Violating those rights is a sure way to misery and failure.

### SHARED OBLIGATIONS AND SHARED REWARDS

Some responsibilities and obligations equally apply to the man and woman. For instance, the obligation of believing in Allāh (ﷻ) and following His commands is identical for both of them. Similarly, they are both responsible and accountable for their actions. They are both equally required to learn the correct religion, worship Allāh, and call to His way. The moral standards are the same for both of them, as are many of the regulations for dealing with other human beings.

The man and woman get similar rewards for obedience to Allāh (ﷻ), and similar punishment for disobedience or sinning. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ، فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً، وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝﴾ النحل ٩٧

**«Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while he is a believer — We will surely grant him a good life, and will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they used to do.»** [1]

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ: "أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ، بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ."﴾ آل عمران ١٩٥

**«Their Lord responded to them (saying), "Verily, I will not let the deeds of any worker among you go to waste — whether male or female; you are of one another."»** [2]

### Between Equality and Fairness

In comparing between women and men, we should realize that Islām does not equate those who are inherently different. There are matters in which men are given preference over women, and vice versa. These preferences stem from the difference in their ability of performing various tasks. Therefore, rather than equating those who can never be equal, our concern should be directed toward fairness in dealing with both. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا۟ مَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ، لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا ٱكْتَسَبُوا۟، وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا ٱكْتَسَبْنَ، وَسْـَٔلُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ، إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ۝﴾ النساء ٣٢

1 *An-Naḥl* 16:97.

2 *Āl-ʿImrān* 3:195.

**«Do not wish for things in which Allāh has preferred some of you over others. Men get a share (or reward) in what they have earned, and women get a share in what they have earned. And ask Allāh of His favors. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowledgeable about all things.»** [1]

### NATURAL DIFFERENCES

We conclude from the above that the Islāmic regulations regarding human beings are equally applicable to men and women. But this does not mean that men and women are identical in everything.

There are certain regulations that strictly apply to women because of their feminine nature, and others that strictly apply to men because of their masculine nature.

Among the most important gender-based instructions were indicated in one of the Prophet's (ﷺ) last speeches. ʿAmr Bin al-Aḥwaṣ al-Jushamī (ﷺ) reported that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) in the "Farewell Pilgrimage" (on ʿArafah) praise and glorify Allāh, remind and reproach the people, and then say:

«ألا واستوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإنهن عوانٍ عندكم، ليس تملكون منهن شيئاً غير ذلك، إلا أن يأتين بفاحشة مبينة. فإن فعلن فاهجروهن في المضاجع، واضربوهن ضرباً غير مبرِّح، فإن أطعنكم فلا تبغوا عليهن سبيلاً. ألا إن لكم على نسائكم حقاً، ولنسائكم عليكم حقاً. فأما حقُّكم على نسائكم، فلا يوطِئن فُرُشَكم من تكرهون، ولا يأذَنَّ في بيوتكم لمن تكرهون. ألا وحقهن عليكم أن تحسنوا إليهن في كسوتهن وطعامهن.»

**‹Lo! Take good care of women, for they surely are captives under your charge, and you do not possess**

1 *An-Nisāʾ* 4:32.

> **of them any more than this (subordination) — unless they commit a manifest sin. If they do, abandon them in sleep, and beat them lightly. If they obey you, do not apply any further punishment. Lo! you have a right upon your women, and your women have a right upon you. Your right upon them is that they should not admit for sitting upon your furnishings or entering into your home anyone you dislike. Lo! And their right upon you is that you treat them well in terms of clothing and food.›** [1]

This clearly indicates that there are specific rights for the women upon their husbands, and other rights specific for the men upon their wives. Keeping this in mind, we emphasize that the subject of this chapter is to discuss the main shared rights and obligations, leaving the gender-based rights and obligations to the following two chapters.

## Responsibility and Accountability

Being masters of the home unit, both men and women carry the great responsibility of establishing and nurturing the family unit. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كلُّ نفسٍ من بني آدم سيِّدٌ: فالرجلُ سيد أهله، والمرأةُ سيدةُ بيتها.»

> **‹Every person among Ādam's children is a master. The man is the master of his family, and the woman is the mistress of her home.›** [2]

Being masters and holders of responsibility, both men and women are also answerable before Allāh (ﷻ) for their responsibility. Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā'ī, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7880 & *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 2030).

2 Recorded by Ibn us-Sunnī and Abū Bakr il-Muqri'. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2041 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 4565).

«كُلّكم راعٍ، وكُلّكم مسؤولٌ عن رعيّته. فالإمامُ راعٍ، وهو مسؤولٌ عن رعيته؛ والرجل راع في أهله، وهو مسؤول عن رعيته؛ والمرأة راعية في بيت زوجها، وهي مسؤولةٌ عن رعيتها؛ والخادم راع في مال سيده، وهو مسؤول عن رعيته؛ والرجل راع في مال أبيه، وهو مسؤولٌ عن رعيته. فكلكم راع، وكلكم مسؤول عن رعيته.»

**‹Each one of you is entrusted with a responsibility, and each one of you will be questioned about his responsibility. The ruler is responsible (for his people), and will be questioned about his responsibility. The man is responsible for his family, and will be questioned about his responsibility. The women is responsible for her husband's house, and will be questioned about her responsibility. The servant is responsible for his master's property, and will be questioned about his responsibility. And a man is responsible for his father's wealth, and will be questioned about his responsibility. Thus, each one of you has a responsibility, and each one of you will be questioned about his responsibility.›** [1]

It is very important for men and women to have a clear understanding of the great responsibility that rests on both of their shoulders. This would make them work hard and cooperate well to fulfill their mission and prepare answers for the Day when they will be questioned about the way they handled their responsibilities.

## Good Manners

### Excellence of Good Manners

Part of the great responsibility of both men and women within their

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

home-unit is to exhibit and act with good manners. Good manners are the distinctive characteristics of the religion of Islām. In a nutshell, they are the reason behind the Prophet's (ﷺ) mission. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنما بُعثتُ لأُتَمِّمَ صالحَ (أو مكارمَ) الأخلاقِ.»

**‹I have only been sent (by Allāh) to complete the good manners.›** [1]

We note here that "good manners" in Islām are not limited to truthfulness, kindness, generosity, and other traits that are commonly known to represent good manners. Rather, "good manners" encompass good manners with Allāh (ﷻ) that are exhibited by truly believing in Him and obeying Him, good manners with the Prophet (ﷺ) that are exhibited by truly following him, and good manners with other people.

Good manners were best demonstrated by our Prophet (ﷺ), whom Allāh (ﷻ) described as:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝﴾ القلم ٤

**«Indeed, your are of a great moral character.»** [2]

The best people after the Prophet (ﷺ) are those with the best manners. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن من خِيارِكم أحسنَكم أخلاقاً.»

**‹Indeed, among the best of you are those with the best manners.›** [3]

And ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أفضلُ المؤمنين أحسنُهم خُلُقاً.»

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1 Recorded by Ibn Saʿd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 2349 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 45).

2 *Al-Qalam* 68:4.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**‹The best among the believers are those with the best manners.›** [1]

A Muslim should display good manners in all of his dealings. This would grant him a most distinguished position among other Muslims. ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن المؤمنَ ليدركُ بحسنِ خُلُقِهِ درجةَ الصائمِ القائمِ.»

**‹Indeed, a believer attains (in *Jannah*), because of his good manners, the level of one who fasts and stands (for the night prayer).›** [2]

Good manners makes a believer worthy of the love of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the closeness to him in *Jannah*. Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن مِن أحبِّكم إليَّ وأقربِكم مني مجلِساً يوم القيامةِ أحاسِنَكم أخلاقاً.»

**‹Indeed, those among you who are most beloved to me and who will be seated nearest to me on Resurrection Day are those with the best manners.›** [3]

And Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكثرُ ما يُدخِلِ الناسَ الجنةَ تقوى اللهِ وحسنُ الخُلُق،

وأكثرُ ما يُدخِلِ الناسَ النارَ الفمُ والفرج.»

**‹The things that mainly cause people to enter *Jannah* are revering Allāh and good manners. And those that mainly cause people to enter the Fire are the**

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1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1128 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1374).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Ḥibbān. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1932).

3 Recorded by at-Tirmiṯhī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 2201 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 791).

**mouth and the private parts.›** [1]

Good manners should not be limited to dealing with distant people. Rather, they should best be implemented with close relatives. More importantly, the two spouses should interact with each other in the highest form of good character. Within the family, one's true character is projected without disguise, because one is then free from most of the formality or showoff that are usually exercised with other people.

Thus, exercising good manners is a shared right and duty between the two spouses; it is emphasized by their extreme closeness, and is necessary for the well being of their relationship. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكملُ المؤمنين إيماناً أحسنُهم خُلُقاً، وخِيارُكم خِيارُكم لنسائهم.»

**‹The believers with the most complete *īmān* are those with most refined manners. And the best among you are those who are best to their women.›** [2]

Therefore, in dealing with one's spouse, one should exhibit good manners in all respects. A detailed discussion of that would be exhaustive and beyond the scope of this book. Yet, in the following sub-sections we discuss some of the most important character traits that must be observed in dealings within the family unit.

#### TRUTHFULNESS

Allāh (ﷻ) praises the truthful in many places of His Book, and considers truthfulness a quality of the believers [3]. He also condemns the liars and considers lying a quality of the hypocrites [4].

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) praised truthfulness and indicated that it leads to *Jannah*, and condemned lying and indicated that it leads to the

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1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Aḥmad, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 977).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn Ḥibbān. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1232 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 284).

3 See, for example, *at-Tawbah* 9:119.

4 See, for example, *al-Munāfiqūn* 63:1.

Hellfire. ʿAbdullāh Bin Masʿūd (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن الصدقَ يهدي إلى البرّ، وإن البرَ يهدي إلى الجنة. وإن الرجلَ ليصدُقُ ويتحرى الصِّدقَ حتى يُكتبَ عندَ اللهِ صِدّيقاً. وإن الكذِبَ يهدي إلى الفجور، وإن الفُجورَ يهدي إلى النار. وإن الرجلَ لَيَكذِبُ ويتحرّى الكذِبَ حتى يُكتبَ عِندَ اللهِ كَذّاباً.»

**‹Indeed, truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to *Jannah*. Indeed, a man would continue to practice and pursue truthfulness until he is recorded with Allāh as a *ṣiddīq* (most truthful).**

**And indeed, lying leads to immorality, and immorality leads to the Fire. Indeed, a man would continue to practice and pursue lying until he is recorded with Allāh as a liar.›** [1]

Truthfulness brings trust and confidence between the two spouses, which are necessary elements for the success of any partnership, marriage being no exception. Lying and deceit, on the other hand, constitute a precarious way that may lead to quick destruction.

Some people carry the misconception that it is permissible to lie to one's spouse without limits. This misconception derives from misunderstanding the following *ḥadīth*s.

Umm Kulthūm Bint ʿUqbah (ﷺ) [2] reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا أعدّه كاذباً: الرجل يصلح بين الناس، يقول القولَ لا يريد به إلا الإصلاحَ. والرجل يقول في الحرب. والرجل يحدّث امرأتَه، والمرأةُ تحدّثُ زوجَها.»

**‹I do not consider him lying: a man who appeases among (dissenting) people and utters a (false)**

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 She is the wife of ʿAbd ur-Raḥmān Bin ʿAwf (ﷺ).

**statement only for the sake of reconciliation; a man who says a (false) statement (to the enemy) during war; and a man who chats with his wife, or a woman who chats with her husband.›** [1]

Asmāʾ Bint Yazīd (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يصلُحُ الكذبُ إلا في ثلاث: يحدّثُ الرجلُ امرأتَه ليرضيَها، والكذبُ في الحرب، والكذبُ ليصلحَ بين الناس.»

**‹Lying is not appropriate except in three situations: when a man chats with his wife to please her, lying (to the enemy) in war, and lying to appease among (dissenting) people.›** [2]

It is clear from the above two *ḥadīth*s that lying between the two spouses is limited to pleasant chatting. That would be in situations such as a man telling his wife that she cooked the best food or has the best dress, or a woman telling her husband that the gift he gave her is most pleasing to her, or telling each other an entertaining imaginary story, and so on. And even in such cases, it is better to substitute lying with *maʿārīḍ* — statements that carry double meanings, at least one of which being true.

#### HUMBLENESS

Humbleness is a required characteristic among the Muslims. Allāh commands even His Messenger (ﷺ) to show humbleness to the believers [3]. ʿIyāḍ Bin Ḥimār (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن اللهَ أوحى إليَّ أن: تواضعوا حتى لا يفخرَ

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 545 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7170).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmiẖī and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 545 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7723).

3 *Ash-Shuʿarāʾ* 26:215.

«أحدٌ على أحد، ولا يبغيَ أحدٌ على أحدٍ.»

**‹Indeed, Allāh has revealed to me that you must show humbleness, so that none among you would boast over anyone else, and none among you would transgress against anyone else.›** [1]

This should be well understood by the spouses. They should show humbleness toward each other, and should avoid boasting about wealth, social status, intelligence, beauty, relatives, ancestors, or any other favor that Allāh may have granted them. Being boastful, especially during arguments, is a sign of ignorance and immaturity that they should both loathe to practice.

#### MERCY AND KINDNESS

The two spouses should show utmost compassion and mercy toward each other. They should be ever ready to overlook, forgive, and guide each other. As discussed early in this book, compassion is an important fruit of marriage, and should never be allowed to go to waste.

A merciful person is worthy of Allāh's mercy. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الراحمون يرحَمُهم الرّحْمٰن. ٱرحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء.»

**‹The merciful ones are granted mercy by the Most Merciful (ﷻ). Show mercy to those who are on Earth, and the One above the heavens will show mercy to you.›** [2]

Similarly, Allāh, the Most Kind, loves kindness and rewards generously for it. Whenever kindness is employed in a situation, it improves and helps it — contrary to harshness. ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her:

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1 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3522 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 925).

«يا عائشة، إن اللهَ رفيقٌ، يحب الرفقَ في الأمر كلِّه، ويعطي على الرِّفقِ ما لا يعطي على العنف، وما لا يعطي على سواه. يا عائشةُ، عليكِ بتقوى اللهِ والرفق، فإن الرفقَ لم يكن في شيءٍ قطُّ إلا زانَه، ولا نُزِع من شيءٍ إلا شانَه.»

**‹O ʿĀʾishah! Indeed, Allāh is Kind, and loves kindness in all affairs. He grants for kindness things that he would not grant for cruelty or any other thing. O ʿĀʾishah! Employ *taqwā* of Allāh and kindness, for indeed, kindness was never in a thing but it adorned it, and never was it removed from a thing but it disgraced it.›** [1]

Indeed, a person without kindness and mercy brings harm on himself before anyone else. Such a person denies himself Allāh's mercy and forgiveness.

Jarīr Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من يُحرَمِ الرِّفقَ يُحرَمِ الخيرَ كُلَّه.»

**‹He who is denied kindness has indeed been denied all forms of good.›** [2]

Abū Hurayrah, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, and Jarīr Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ) all reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من لا يَرحمْ لا يُرحمْ.»

**‹He who does not show mercy, no mercy will be shown to him (by Allāh).›** [3]

It is the obligation of both spouses to nurture kindness and mercy

1 This is a combined narration recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, and others (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7920, 7921, and 7927).

2 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

in their family. This should be the first cure that they apply when problems and differences arise between them. Not only would that help resolve their problems, but would also grant them Allāh's love and mercy, as in the above *ḥadīth*s.

#### FORGIVENESS

A Muslim should not have the attitude of revenge and "getting even". This would cause hatred among the Muslims and remove from among them feelings of love and security. A Muslim should always be willing to forgive, especially when dealing with the spouse and close relatives. Showing forgiveness makes a person worthy of Allāh's forgiveness. In one of the reports of the above *ḥadīth* by Jarīr Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من لا يَرحمْ لا يُرحمْ، ومن لا يَغْفِرْ لا يُغفَر له.»

**‹He who does not show mercy, no mercy will be shown to him (by Allāh). And he who does not forgive will not be forgiven.›** [1]

We have a great example in Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) who never took personal revenge for himself. ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported:

"ما رأيتُ رسول الله منتصراً من مظلمةٍ ظُلِمَها قط، ما لم يُنتَهك من محارم الله شيء. فإذا ٱنتُهِكَ من محارمِ اللهِ شيءٌ كان من أشدِّهم في ذلك غضباً. وما خُيّر بين أمرين إلا ٱختارَ أيسرَهما، ما لم يكن مأثماً."

"I never saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) seek revenge when he was wronged — except when one of Allāh's prohibitions was overstepped. When any of Allāh's prohibitions was overstepped, he would be most angry

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 6599 & 6600).

because of it. Also, whenever he was given a choice between two matters, he would choose the easiest of the two — unless it involved a sin." [1]

### AVOIDING OPPRESSION

The two spouses should be fair and just in dealing with each other. They should avoid oppressing each other in any way. They should not take unfair advantage of their rights, or abuse each other through their distinctive qualities. Oppression has been prohibited by Allāh (ﷻ), even upon Himself! Abū Tharr (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا عبادي، إني حرّمتُ الظُلمَ على نفسي
وجعلتُه بينكم محرّماً، فلا تظالموا.»

**‹Allāh (ﷻ) says, "O my servants! I have indeed prohibited injustice upon Myself and made it prohibited among you, so do not oppress one another."›** [2]

Oppression is a great sin that deserves Allāh's wrath and brings about His punishment in both lives. Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh and ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اِتّقوا الظُلمَ، فإن الظُلمَ ظُلماتٌ يوم القيامةِ.»

**‹Avoid oppression, because oppression will result in deep darkness on the Day of Resurrection.›** [3]

In another report, Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh (ﷺ) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«اِتّقوا الظُلمَ، فإن الظُلمَ ظُلماتٌ يوم القيامةِ،
واتّقوا الشُحَّ، فإن الشح أهلكَ من كان قبلَكُم.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.
2 Recorded by Muslim.
3 Recorded by Muslim and others.

**‹Avoid oppression, because oppression will result in deep darkness on the Day of Resurrection; and avoid stinginess, because stinginess destroyed those who preceded you.›** [1]

Let not feelings of superiority and dominance creep into the heart of either of the two spouses, causing him (or her) to oppress the other spouse, thinking that he (or she) has accomplished thereby a well earned victory. Let them both ponder over the above *ḥadīth*s, and let them beware of a secret curse that may arise from the heavy heart of an oppressed person. Anas Bin Mālik (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اِتّقوا دعوة المظلوم، وإن كان كافراً، فإنه ليس دونَها حجاب.»

**‹Avoid the oppressed's supplication (against you), even if he was a *kāfir*, because there is no barrier in its way (to Allāh).›** [2]

And oppression is never forgotten, and will never go unpunished. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من كانت لأخيه عندَه مَظْلَمةٌ من عِرضٍ أو مالٍ، فَلْيتحَلّلْهُ اليومَ، قبلَ أن يُؤخَذَ منه يومَ لا دينارَ ولا درهم: فإن كان له عملٌ صالحٌ، أُخِذَ منه بقدرِ مظْلَمَتِه؛ وإن لم يكن له عملٌ، أُخِذَ من سيّئاتِ صاحبِه فجُعِلت عليه.»

**‹Whoever has oppressed his brother in regard to his honor or property should beg for his forgiveness today — before it will be taken from him on a Day when there will be no *dīnār*s or *dirham*s: If he has good deeds, some of them will be taken in the**

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Yaʿlā, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 767 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 119).

**amount of his oppression; and if he has no good deeds, some of his (oppressed) companion's sins will be taken and loaded upon him.›** [1]

#### AVOIDING FOUL LANGUAGE

The marriage relationship should remain clean and refined from the filth and obscenity of the street. It should be exemplary, first between the two spouses, and then in front of their children, in uttering words pleasing to Allāh, His Messenger (ﷺ), and the believers. ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) advised her:

«يا عائشةُ، لا تكوني فاحشةً. إن اللهَ لا يحب الفاحِش المتفحِّش.»

**‹O ʿĀ'ishah! Do not be obscene. Indeed, Allāh does not love a vile person who relishes obscenity.›** [2]

And this is how Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was — as described by ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها):

"لم يكن رسول الله فاحشاً ولا متفحشاً، ولا صخاباً في الأسواق، ولا يجزئُ بالسيئةِ، ولكن يعفو ويصفح."

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was not obscene, nor did he relish obscenity, nor was he loud in the markets. He did not punish for any (personal) harm, but forgave and pardoned." [3]

#### AVOIDING ARGUING AND QUARRELING

Frequent arguing and quarreling should be seriously avoided because

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Aḥmad.

2 This is a combined narration recorded by Muslim, al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*), and Abū Dāwūd (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7933 & 7922, and *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2133).

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Mukhtaṣar ush-Shamā'il* p. 182).

it is a sure way to undermining the ties between the married couple. Each spouse should bear in mind that it is not always vital to prove his (or her) point and be the victor in every argument. Allāh promises a house in *Jannah* for those who drops arguing, even when they are right. Abū Umāmah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أنا زعيمٌ ببيتٍ في ربضِ الجنة لمن ترك المِراء وإن كان مُحِقاً،
وببيت في وسط الجنة لمن ترك الكذب وإن كان مازحاً، وببيتٍ
في أعلى الجنة لمن حسُن خلُقُه.»

**‹I am a guarantor of a house on the outskirts of *Jannah* for one who abandons arguing, even if he is right; and a house in the center of *Jannah* for one who abandons lying, even if he is joking; and a house in the highest place of *Jannah* for one who has good manners.›** [1]

On the other hand, Allāh hates a stubborn, quarrelsome person. ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أبغضُ الرجالِ إلى اللهِ الألدُّ الخَصِم.»

**‹The most hated man to Allāh is that who is obstinately quarrelsome.›** [2]

#### Resolving Problems Amicably

There is always some chance for misunderstanding or disagreement between the two spouses. Some of these differences may cause one or both of them to turn away from the other and seek hasty solutions that may jeopardize the marriage. But it is recommended for them to first seek reconciliation, which Allāh (ﷻ) considers as the best approach:

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and aḍ-Ḍiyāʾ ul-Maqdisī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1464 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 273).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

﴿وَإِنِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا، فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَن يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا، وَٱلصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ، وَأُحْضِرَتِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ ٱلشُّحَّ، وَإِن تُحْسِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ١٢٨

**«And if a woman fears from her husband contempt or evasion, there is no sin upon them if they make terms of settlement between them — and settlement is (always) best. And present in (human) souls is stinginess. But if you do good and revere Allāh — indeed, Allāh is ever Aware of all what you do.»** [1]

## Communication and Company

### Importance of Communication

The two spouses should maintain a good level of communication between them. They should share their happiness, concerns, and sorrows. That preserves their ties of love and compassion, and fulfills the meaning of "dwelling" that should be established between them, as was discussed in the first part of this series. [2]

It was the Prophet's (ﷺ) regular practice to visit all of his wives every night, chatting lightly with each, before going to the one whose turn it was for that night. The long *ḥadīth* of Umm Zarʿ (fully cited in Chapter 6), is a good example of beneficial chatting that the Prophet (ﷺ) held with his wives.

### Regulations for Desertion

There are, of course, situations where it is permissible to desert another Muslim as a form of retribution. As an example, we will be discussing later the permission in Islām to desert the bed of a rebellious wife, and we will study instances where the Prophet (ﷺ) deserted some or all of his wives.

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1 *An-Nisā'* 4:128.

2 Review "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

However, deserting another Muslim should not be done except after exhausting easier approaches, and with the understanding that it is being implemented as a temporary form of treatment. Long-term abandonment brings repulsion and hardness of the heart[1] and is therefore prohibited.

Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ʿUmar, Abū Ayyūb, and other companions (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحِلُّ لمسلمٍ أن يهجرَ أخاه فوق ثلاثةِ أيام.»

**‹It is not permissible for a Muslim to abandon his brother for more than three days.›** [2]

In many of his *ḥadīth*s, the Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized the gravity of deserting a Muslim. For example, Hishām Bin ʿAmir (ﷺ) reported that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«لا يحل لمسلم أن يصارم مسلماً فوق ثلاث، فإنهما ناكبان عن الحق ما داما على صِرامهما. وإن أوَّلهما فيئاً يكونُ كفّارةٌ عنه سَبْقُه بالفيْءِ. وإن ماتا على صِرامِهما لم يدخلا الجنةَ جميعاً أبداً. وإن سلّم عليه، فأبى أن يقبلَ تسليمَه وسلامه، ردّ عليه مَلَك، ورد على الآخر شيطانٌ.»

**‹It is not permissible for a Muslim to abandon another Muslim for more than three nights. Indeed, they both are straying from the right (path) while they continue their abandonment. As for the first of them to conciliate, his lead to conciliation would surely expiate his sin. And indeed, if they die in that state (of dissension), they will never enter *Jannah*. And if one of them gives *salām* to the other, but the other refuses to accept his *salām* and peace, an angel**

1 As the English saying goes, "Out of sight, out of mind."

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**would respond to the first (with *salām*), whereas a devil would respond to the other (because of his silence).»** [1]

## Aiding One Another

### The Obligation of Mutual Help

Being sworn partners of good standing, the two spouses should do all that is within their capacity to help each other and make their partnership successful. That includes physical, monetary, and emotional support.

When one of the two spouses is performing a **permissible** act, it is **recommended** for the other spouse to help him (or her) to the best of his (or her) ability. And when one of the two spouses is performing an **obligation**, it is **incumbent** on the other spouse to help him (or her) to the best of his (or her) ability. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلْبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقْوَىٰ، وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَانِ، وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ۝﴾ المائدة ٢

**«Help one another in righteousness and *taqwā*, and do not help one another in sinning and transgression. And fear and revere Allāh; verily, Allāh is severe in punishment.»** [2]

### One May Not Be Aided in Disobeying Allāh

On the other hand, we conclude from the above *āyah* that when one of the two spouses performs a ***makrūh*** **(disapproved)** act, it is **disapproved** for the other spouse to help him (or her). And when one of the two spouses performs a **prohibited** act, it is **prohibited** for the other spouse to help him (or her). ʿAlī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 2029).

2 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا طاعةَ لِبَشَر في معصيةِ اللهِ، إنما الطاعةُ في المعروفِ.»

**‹Obedience may not be offered to a human being if it involves disobeying Allāh. Obedience should only be in good things.›** [1]

### AIDING EACH OTHER IN ACTS OF WORSHIP AND OBEDIENCE

An individual by himself may sometimes weaken or slacken in performing some acts of worship. Kind help and support would bring him added confidence and determination. And who is more suitable for giving that support than one's own spouse? A fine example on this is given by the Prophet (ﷺ) concerning the night prayers. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«رحِمَ اللهُ رجلاً قامَ مِن الليل فصلى، وأيقظَ امرأتَهُ فصلت، فإن أبَت نضَحَ في وجهها الماءَ. ورَحِمَ اللهُ امرأة قامَت مِن الليل فَصَلت، وأيقظت زوجَها فصلى، فإن أبى نضحَت في وجهِهِ الماءَ.»

**‹May Allāh have mercy on a man who wakes up at night and prays, and wakes up his wife to pray — and if she resists, he would lightly spray water on her face; and may Allāh have mercy on a woman who wakes up at night and prays, and wakes up her husband to pray — and if he resists, she would lightly spray water on his face.›** [2]

One should note in this *ḥadīth* the friendly and pleasant manner of waking the other spouse. In the middle of his sleep, a person will

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. A similar *ḥadīth* is recorded by Aḥmad and others from ʿImrān Bin Ḥuṣayn (رضي الله عنه) and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 179,180).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3494).

surely be very alarmed by someone abruptly shaking him or pouring a bucket of cold water over him, which would then make him reluctant to cooperate with the individual who caused him that annoyance and bother. On the other hand, a nice and friendly approach should normally result in good cooperation.

## Safeguarding the Family

We discussed earlier in this chapter that both spouses have a major responsibility within the family. Part of that responsibility is to protect the family from damage or destruction. That can only be done through steering the family toward the good teachings of Islām and away from the evils of Satan and his followers.

Therefore, the two spouses must help each other in guiding their children toward *Jannah* and away from the Fire. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَهۡلِيكُمۡ نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُ﴾ التحريم ٦

**«O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.»** [1]

Commenting on this *āyah*, it is reported that ʿAlī (ﷺ) said:

> "Teach them the good manners and educate them." [2]

And Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ) said:

> "Act in obedience to Allāh, avoid disobedience to Allāh, and command your families to act in remembrance (of Allāh): Allāh would then save you from the Fire." [3]

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1 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:6.

2 *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr.*

3 *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr.*

## Enjoining the Good and Forbidding the Wrong

The two spouses should help each other in enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong, first toward one another, and then with other people. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ، يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ، وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ، وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ، وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ، وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ. أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ، إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۞ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ، وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ۞﴾ التوبة ٧١-٧٢

**«The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin the right, forbid the wrong, establish prayer, give *zakāh*, and obey Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh will show mercy to these. Indeed! Allāh is Mighty and Wise.**

**Allāh has promised the believing men and women gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide eternally, and (He promised them) pleasant dwellings in gardens of everlasting bliss (ʿAdn or Eden). But greater than all of this is the good acceptance from Allāh: That is surely the great achievement.»** [1]

## Fulfilling Each Others' Desire

We have discussed in the first book of this series [2] that one of the main objectives of marriage is the preservation of chastity. This generally

1 *At-Tawbah* 9:71-72.

2 Review "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

pertains more to the man than the woman; but it surely applies to the woman as well, as it is her husband's obligation to gratify her to the best of his ability.

Thus, it is an obligation on each of the two spouses to fulfill his (or her) marital duty toward the other spouse. They should both do all that they can, provided that it is Islāmically permissible, to protect one another from Satan's temptations. More of this will be discussed in the next two chapters, and a detailed discussion of the acts of intimacy between the two spouses was presented in the second book of this series. [1]

1 Review "Closer Than a Garment" by the author.

# CHAPTER 2

# THE HUSBAND'S OBLIGATIONS

## The Woman's Rights

### CULTURES PRIOR TO ISLĀM

In ancient nations and societies that deviated from the pure Revelation, the woman was considered a tradable commodity. In some cultures, she was even believed to be a filthy being from the making of Satan. This notion about women was present even in Jewish and Christian texts.

Similarly, the woman's position was extremely degraded during *Jāhiliyyah*. She was considered part of her father's or husband's property, and was transferred by inheritance like other parts of the estate. The Arabs regarded the birth of a baby girl a bad omen, and would often get rid of her by burying her alive.

The woman's status and rights are only established in Allāh's fair guidance, which was brought by His messengers through the ages. After the alteration or obliteration of all of the previous messages, Islām came to crown all of those messages with a most perfect guidance from Allāh, leaving no detail untouched, and reestablishing the right position for the woman. She is not a lesser being that the man may humiliate and oppress at convenience. Rather, she is his counterpart. ʿĀ'ishah, Anas, and Umm Sulaym (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنما النساءُ شقائقُ الرجال.»

**‹Indeed, the women are only full sisters of men.›** [1]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1983, 2333).

### THE WOMAN'S RIGHTS IN ISLĀM

The woman's rights are ordained by Allāh, and no one may violate them for any reason. Al-Miqdām (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله تعالى يوصيكم بالنساء خيراً، فإنهنّ أمهاتُكم وبناتُكم وخالاتُكم. إن الرجلَ من أهل الكتاب يُزوَّج المرأة وما تعلق يداها الخيط، فما يرغبُ واحدٌ منهما عن صاحبه.»

**‹Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) commands you to be good to the women; indeed, they are your mothers, daughters, and (maternal) aunts. Indeed, a man from the People of the Book would be married to a woman who can hardly know how to pull a string (from ignorance), and yet, neither of them would want to depart from his companion.›** [1]

The woman's lesser physical strength is not, by any means, a justification for the man to overstep her rights. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إني أُحرِّجُ عليكم حقَّ الضعيفين: اليتيمِ والمرأةِ.»

**‹I strongly admonish you in regard to the right of the two weak ones: the orphan and the woman.›** [2]

### THE WIFE'S RIGHTS IN ISLĀM

The wife's rights on her husband are clearly ordained and strongly established in Islām. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) gave the following

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1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr. Initially verified to be weak by al-Albānī. But he subsequently considered it *ḥasan*, as is noted by Zuhayr ash-Shāwīsh in *Ḍa'īf ul-Jāmi'* no. 1763.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1015 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 2447).

instruction to a number of his companions, including ʿUthmān Bin Maẓʿūn [1] and ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr [2] (ﷺ):

«إن لزوجِكَ عليك حقاً.»

**‹Your wife has a right upon you.›** [3]

ʿAmr Bin al-Aḥwaṣ (ﷺ) reported [4] that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ألا إن لكم على نسائكم حقاً، ولنسائكم عليكم حقاً.»

**‹Lo! you have rights on your women, and your women have rights on you.›** [5]

Fulfilling the wife's rights is an indication of *taqwā*: revering Allāh and fearing His punishment. It is a trust between the man and his Lord (ﷻ), and He will question him about that trust. Jābir (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اتقوا اللهَ في النساء، فإنكم أخذتُموهنّ بأمانة الله، واستحللتم فُروجَهنَّ بكلمة الله، ولهنّ عليكم رزقُهُنَّ وكِسوَتُهُنَّ بالمعروف.»

**‹Have *taqwā* of Allāh in regard to your women. Indeed, you took them (in marriage) through a trust with Allāh, and had access to their private parts by Allāh's word (permission). They have a right on you — that you provide them with food and clothing in a fitting manner.›** [6]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 2015).

2 The full *ḥadīth* is cited later in this chapter.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

4 The full *ḥadīth* is cited p. 3.

5 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā'ī, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7880 & *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 2030).

6 Recorded by Muslim and Abū Dāwūd as part of Jābir's long *ḥadīth* describing the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Ḥajj*.

The woman has rights and obligations. Her rights must be fulfilled in a serious and fair manner. This is an important requirement in Islām; neglecting it constitutes a clear act of disobedience and threatens the well-being of the family and the Muslim society.

With this introduction, we go on to discuss some of the rights that are specifically related to the women in Islām.

## Protection

### An Important Obligation upon the Husband

Security and safety are most important for a human being. One needs to feel reasonably secure in order to function normally and perform one's regular tasks.

The wife is usually the weaker of the two spouses, and looks to her husband for protection. Thus, one of the husband's most important obligations is providing protection for his wife. This is part of his responsibility as leader of the family:

﴿ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ﴾ النساء ٣٤

**«Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allāh has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth.»** [1]

This *āyah* shows that Allāh gave leadership (or *qawāmah*) to the man because of certain qualities that would normally enable him to conduct such a responsibility. A most important quality of a leader is his ability to protect his followers and provide for them an atmosphere of security and harmony.

Protection is a general term that covers physical, emotional, and other forms of well-being. The husband must strive to protect his wife in all of those respects. Some details in this regard will be discussed

1 *An-Nisā'* 4:34.

in the subsequent sections.

### *GHAYRAH*

As a demonstration of a man's love toward his wife, he should have *ghayrah* for her. *Ghayrah* is the great concern about her well-being, and the zeal to protect her from anything that may harm her person, such as an evil touch, word, or look.

But *ghayrah* should not reach the point of distrusting and suspecting her without reason, nor should it be for the purpose of finding possible mistakes. Jābir Bin ʿAtīk (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن من الغَيْرة ما يحب اللهُ، ومنها ما يبغض ٱللهُ. فأما الغيرة التي يحب اللهُ، فالغيرةُ في ريبة. وأما التي يُبغِضُ اللهُ، فالغيرة في غير ريبة.»

> **‹Indeed, there is a form of *ghayrah* that Allāh loves, and a form that Allāh hates. *Ghayrah* that Allāh loves is that which is based on (valid) suspicion. And *ghayrah* that Allāh hates is that which is without (valid) suspicion.›** [1]

A person without *ghayrah* is called *dayyūth*. A *dayyūth* is a person who has no sense of protection or honor regarding his wife. As we discussed in the second book of this series [2], a *dayyūth* will not enter *Jannah*.

### AVOIDING UNNECESSARY SUSPICION

As is indicated in the above sub-section, one should not nurture unjustifiable doubts about his wife, nor should he dig for mistakes for which he would then blame her.

For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited a man from coming unexpectedly to his home — as though he is trying to catch his wife

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwāʾul-Ghalīl* no. 1999).

2 See "Closer than a Garment" by the author.

red-handed with something that he does not like. Jābir (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أطال أحدُكم الغَيْبَة فلا يطرُقْ أهلَه ليلاً.»

**‹When one of you is back from a long journey, he should not suddenly come to his family by night.›** [1]

Similarly, Anas (ﷺ) reported:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) never came to his families (after a journey) by night. He would either come to them during the morning or the afternoon." [2]

#### SAFEGUARDING HER SECRETS

It is greatly prohibited for a man to expose his wife's secrets, especially in matters of privacy that no person would normally know except the husband, such as physical or emotional anomalies, reaction to some intimate acts, and so on.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن من أشدِّ الناسِ عند اللهِ منزلةً يوم القيامة الرجلُ
يفضي إلى امرأته، وتُفضي إليه، ثم ينشُرُ سِرَّها.»

**‹Indeed, among the people who will have the most grievous position before Allāh on the Day of Resurrection is a man who, after he privately approaches his wife and she privately approaches him, he exposes her secrets.›** [3]

Exposing the wife's secrets brings mistrust and fear into her heart, and could be an indication of a man's inclination toward being a

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

*dayyūth.*

## Financial Support

### It Is Part of Being Responsible

One of the husband's major responsibilities toward his wife and family is providing financial support. This responsibility is one of the important reasons for which Allāh appointed the man as the head of the family:

﴿ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنفَقُواْ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ﴾ النساء ٣٤

**«Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allāh has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth.»** [1]

In Jābir's (ﷺ) *ḥadīth* that we cited earlier, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ولهنّ عليكم رزقُهُنَّ وكِسوَتُهُنَّ بالمعروف.»

**‹They (your women) have a right on you — that you provide them with food and clothing in a fitting manner.›** [2]

### It Should Be According to His Capability

The financial support required from the husband is in accordance with his financial capability. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿لاَ يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْساً إِلاَّ وُسْعَهَا﴾ البقرة ٢٨٦

**«Allāh does not burden a person beyond his**

1 *An-Nisā'* 4:34.

2 Recorded by Muslim and Abū Dāwūd.

**capacity.»** [1]

The husband is not required to give more than what he has, nor is he allowed to provide inadequate support when he can afford giving more. Allāh (ﷻ) says in regard to the women who get divorced before consummating the marriage:

﴿وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى ٱلْمُوسِعِ قَدَرُهُۥ، وَعَلَى ٱلْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُۥ، مَتَٰعًۢا بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ، حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝﴾ البقرة ٢٣٦

**«Give them (the divorced) compensation — the wealthy according to his capability, and the poor according to his capability — a provision according to what is reasonable, a duty upon the good-doers.»** [2]

And Allāh (ﷻ) says in regard to supporting the divorced women during their *ʿiddah* (waiting period):

﴿لِيُنفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ، وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُۥ فَلْيُنفِقْ مِمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ؛ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَآ ءَاتَىٰهَا. سَيَجْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ۝﴾ الطلاق ٧

**«Let a man of wealth spend from his wealth; and as for him whose provision is restricted — let him spend from what Allāh has given him. Allāh does not require from a soul except (according to) what He has given it. Allāh will bring about, after hardship, ease.»** [3]

#### SELF-SUFFICIENCY

A man must seriously view his financial responsibility toward his wife

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:286.

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:236.

3 *Aṭ-Ṭalāq* 65:7.

and family. He should not look to others for help before he has exhausted all possible means of becoming independent and self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency brings a feeling of security and dignity to the whole family, and is therefore a goal that deserves earnest pursuit.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«واللهِ لأن يغدوَ أحدُكم فيحتطبَ على ظهره، فيبيعه ويستغني بذلك ويتصدّقَ منه، خيرٌ له من أن يأتيَ رجلاً فيسأَلَه، يؤتِيَهُ أو يمنعَه، وَذلك أن اليدَ العليا خيرٌ من اليدِ السفلى. وأبدأ بمن تعولُ.»

**‹By Allāh, for one of you to go in the morning, collect firewood, carry it on his back, and sell it to suffice himself and give charity from it: that is better for him than going to a man and asking him — he either giving or denying him. That is because the upper (giving) hand is better than the lower (receiving) hand. And start (giving) to those for whom you are responsible.›**

Someone asked, "For whom am I responsible, O Allāh's Messenger?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«امرأتُك ممن تعول، وجاريتُك، وولدُك.»

**‹Your wife is of those for whom you are responsible, as well as your slave girl and your child.›** [1]

It is unfortunate to observe that many Muslim men in the West rely strongly or solely on financial aid or public assistance — when they have the means of sufficing themselves, as in the above *ḥadīth*. It is also pathetic to note that there are cases where a man would marry two or more wives and have them all live off public assistance while he conducts an irresponsible life, not performing his duty of supporting them, but rather, in some cases, taking the money that they thus earn and using it for his own purposes!

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. The last portion is recorded by ad-Dāraquṭnī and Aḥmad (*Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 834).

**A HIGHLY REWARDABLE CHARITY**

Besides being an obligation upon the man, spending on his wife and family counts as charity for him.

ʿAmr Bin Umayyah aḍ-Ḍamrī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما أعطى الرجلُ ٱمرأتَهُ فهو صدقة.»

**‹Whatever a man gives to his wife is a charity (in his record).›** [1]

Abū Masʿūd al-Anṣārī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أنفق الرجلُ على أهله نفقةً يحتسبُها كانت له صدقةً.»

**‹When a Muslim spends on his family, thereby seeking Allāh's reward, it is regarded as *ṣadaqah* for him.›** [2]

Saʿd Bin Abī Waqqāṣ (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إنك مهما أنفقت على أهلِك من نفقةٍ فإنك تؤجر،

حتى اللقمةَ ترفعها إلى في ٱمرأتِك.»

**‹Indeed, whatever money you spend on your family, you will be rewarded for it — even for a morsel of food that you raise to your wife's mouth.›** [3]

Al-Miqdām Bin Maʿdi Yakrib (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«ما أطعمتَ نفسَك فهو لك صدقةٌ، وما أطعمتَ ولَدَكَ

فهو لك صدقةٌ، وما أطعمتَ زوجَك فهو لك صدقة،

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1024 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5540).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

وما أطعمتَ خادمَك فهو لك صدقة.»

**‹Whatever you feed yourself is a charity for you, whatever you feed your child is a charity for you, whatever you feed your wife is a charity for you, and whatever you feed your servant is a charity for you.›** [1]

### THE BEST FORM OF SPENDING

A man's concern should first be about reasonably sufficing his wife and family — even before giving money for Allāh's cause. Jābir Bin Samurah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أعطى اللهُ أحدَكم خيراً فليبدأ بنفسه وأهلِ بيته.»

**‹When Allāh gives one of you some good (i.e., sustenance), he should start by (spending on) himself and his family members.›** [2]

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said;

«دينارٌ أنفقتَه في سبيل الله، ودينارٌ أنفقته في رقبة، ودينار تصدقت بهِ على مِسكين، ودينارٌ أنفقتَه على أهلِك، أعظمُها أجراً الذي أنفقته على أهلِكَ.»

**‹A *dīnār* that you spend for Allāh's cause (i.e., *jihād*), a *dīnār* that you contribute toward freeing a slave, a *dīnār* that you give as charity to a needy person, and a *dīnār* that you spend on your family: the one yielding the greatest reward is that which you spend on your family.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*), and al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 452).

2 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

3 Recorded by Muslim.

### ADEQUATE SUPPORT IS AN EARNED RIGHT FOR THE WIFE

If a man does not financially support his wife in a manner compatible with his financial resources and her needs, she would be justified to take, without his permission, a portion of his money that would suffice her and her children.

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Hind Bint ʿUtbah came to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and said, "O Allāh's Messenger! Indeed, Abū Sufyān is a stingy man. He does not give me what would suffice me and my children — except for that which I take without his knowledge." He (ﷺ) said:

«خذي من مالِهِ بالمعروفِ ما يكفيكِ ويكفي بنيكِ.»

**‹Take of his money, in a reasonable manner, as much as would suffice you and your children.›** [1]

### THE GREAT SIN OF NEGLECT

It is a great sin for a man to neglect appropriately supporting his wife and dependents. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كفى إثماً أن تَحْبِسَ عمن تملك قُوتَهُ.»

**‹A sufficient sin for you would be that you hold (support) off those whom you are responsible for feeding.›** [2]

In another report, ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كفى بالمرء إثماً أن يضيِّع من يقوت.»

**‹A sufficient sin for a person would be that he neglects those whom he should feed.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Recorded by Muslim.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 4481 & *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 894).

### Providing Her with Food, Clothing, and Other Basic Needs

The wife's right for financial support includes food and clothing. Allāh (ﷻ) says in regard to the nursing mothers:

﴿وَعَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ﴾ البقرة ٢٣٣

**«Upon the father is their (the mothers') provision and clothing according to what is reasonable.»** [1]

The same meaning is seen in the above *ḥadīth* of Jābir (p. 27). Similarly, Mu'āwiyah Bin Ḥaydah al-Qushayrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حقُّ المرأة على الزوجِ إن يطعمَها إذا طَعِم، ويكسوَها إذا ٱكتسى،
ولا يضرُبَ الوجهَ، ولا يقبِّحَ، ولا يهجُرَ إلاّ في البيتِ.»

**‹A woman's right on her husband is that he feeds her when he eats, clothes her when he clothes himself, avoids hitting her face, avoids despising her (by words or actions), and avoids deserting her — except within the same house.›** [2]

In another report, Mu'āwiyah Bin Ḥaydah (رضي الله عنه) said that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "O Allāh's Messenger! What is the right of one's wife upon him?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«أن تطعمها إذا طعمت، وتكسوها إذا اكتسيت، ولا تقبِّح
الوجه، ولا تضرب، ولا تهجر إلا في البيت، كيف وقد أفضى
بعضكم إلى بعض - إلا بما حل عليهن.»

**‹(Her right upon you is) that you feed her when you**

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:233.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*), al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 3149 & *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 2033).

**feed yourself, clothe her when you clothe yourself, avoid disgracing her face, avoid hitting her, and avoid deserting her except within the same house — especially that you have come to be so intimate with each other — except in things that would make it permissible to punish her.»** [1]

#### PROVIDING A REASONABLE DWELLING

It is a right for the wife to be reasonably housed — in accordance with her husband's capability. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنتُم مِّن وُجْدِكُمْ،
وَلَا تُضَارُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُواْ عَلَيْهِنَّ﴾ الطلاق ٦

**«Lodge them (the divorced) according to what you reside out of your means, and do not harass them in order to make life difficult for them.»** [2]

Even though this *āyah* directly applies to the divorced women during their waiting period, its meaning is more general. It also applies to all those for whom a man is responsible; most importantly: his wife and children.

#### THE DOWRY

The *ṣadāq* or *mahr* (dowry) is the first financial right of a woman upon her husband. It becomes due as soon as the marriage contract is performed. We have discussed this subject in the first book [3] of this series, so we refer the reader to it for more details.

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīh Abī Dāwūd* no. 1875-1877 & *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2033).

2 *Aṭ-Ṭalāq* 65:6.

3 See "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

## Kind Treatment and Compassion

### An Obligation upon the Husband

The wife has the right to be respected and treated kindly. This is not an optional favor from her husband. It is an obligation established through a divine command. What a man cannot control (the heart's inclination) must not affect the way he treats his wife. Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ، فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ١٩

**«Live with them (your wives) in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which Allāh has placed much good.»** [1]

### Token of His Good Nature

Rendering kindness to the wife is a sign of good nature and righteousness. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave the perfect example of how a righteous believer should treat his wife. ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُكم خيرُكم لأهله، وأنا خيرُكم لأهلي.»

**‹The best of you are those who are best to his family, and I am the best of you toward my family.›** [2]

Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ʿAbbās, and others (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«خياركم خياركم لنسائهم (لأهله).»

**‹The best among you are those who are best to their**

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1 *An-Nisā'* 4:19.

2 Recorded by at-Tirmiṯhī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 285).

**women (or family).›** [1]

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) also reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكمل المؤمنين إيماناً أحسنهم خُلُقاً، وخيارهم خيارهم لنسائهم.»

**‹The believers who are most complete in faith are those of best manners; and the best among them are those who are best (in treatment) to their women.›** [2]

### UNDERSTANDING THE WOMAN'S FRAGILE NATURE

The woman has a fragile nature, both physically and emotionally. Understanding this enables the man to treat her with consideration and compassion.

Anas (ﷺ) reported that once Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was on a journey, and had his wives with him. An Abyssinian camel-driver called Anjashah was driving the women. He would sing lyrics as he drove the camels, and his singing would cause the women's camels to go faster. So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) told him:

«ويحكَ يا أنْجَشَةُ! رُويدَكَ سَوْقَكَ بالقوارير.»

**‹Woe be to you, O Anjashah! Go slow in your (singing while) driving the (fragile) vessels** [3]**.›** [4]

According to a number of scholars, including al-Bukhārī, al-Qurṭibī, and al-ʿAsqalānī [5], Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) meant two things by this:

1. Women have a delicate nature and build, and driving them too fast could harm them or make them fall.

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmiṯhī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3265, 3266, 3316).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmiṯhī and Ibn Ḥibbān. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 284).

3 Note that we derived this book's title from this *ḥadīth*.

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

5 As in *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*.

2. Women have an emotional nature, making it easy for them to be moved by singing and poetry, which could affect their hearts and bring *fitnah* to them.

#### Understanding and Coping with the Wife's Attitude

Every person, male or female, may exhibit an attitude of anger from time to time. A man should not make his wife's occasional anger a means of retaliation and revenge. Rather, he should deal with it jokingly or with light spirits, following the Prophet's (ﷺ) example. ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that one day Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her:

«إني لأعلم إذا كنتِ عني راضية، وإذا كنتِ عليّ غضبى.
أمّا إذا كنتِ عني راضيةً، فإنكِ تقولين: "لا وربِّ محمد."
وإذا كنتِ عليّ غضبى قلتِ: "لا وربِّ إبراهيم."»

**‹Indeed, I know when you are pleased with me, and when you are angry: When you are pleased with me you say (while making an oath), "No, by the Lord of Muḥammad." And when you are angry with me you say, "No, by the Lord of Ibrāhīm."›**

She replied, "Yes indeed, by Allāh, O Allāh's Messenger! I do not abandon (when angry) except your name." [1]

#### Understanding the Woman's Different (Bent-Rib) Nature

When the woman makes a mistake, her husband should maintain patience and kindness, realizing that some of what may appear as mistakes is probably not so. The woman has a different nature from the man's, and thus may take actions different from what he would.

The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated that the woman (Ḥawwāʾ or Eve) was originally created from the man's (Ādam's) rib. By nature, the rib is bent. Thus, a woman's nature will never totally coincide with a man's because there is a "bend" between them.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Aḥmad.

It may be equally true to say that, from a woman's viewpoint, there is a bend in the man's nature, which means that his actions will never completely coincide with hers.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) ordered:

«استوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإن المرأةَ خلقت من ضلعٍ أعوجَ،
وإن أعوج شيءٍ في الضِّلعِ أعلاه؛ فإذا ذهبتَ تقيمه كسرتَه،
وإن تركتَه لم يزلْ أعوجَ؛ فاستوصوا بالنساء خيراً.»

**‹Take good care of women, because the woman was created from a bent rib, and the most curved part of a rib is its upper end. If you insist on straightening it, you will break it; and if you leave it, it will remain bent. So take good care of women.›** [1]

The reference in this *ḥadīth* to the rib's upper end seems to point to the head, which houses major human faculties (seeing and hearing) and the tongue that performs the speaking. The head is also the part of the body where the thinking process takes place. Ibn Ḥajar (ﷺ) said:

> "It is possible that he (ﷺ) gave this as example for the uppermost part of the woman, because her uppermost part is her head: It encases her tongue from which harm comes." [2]

This means that the difference between the man and woman is mostly in their different approach to dealing with issues that require thinking, the way they perceive things, and the way they emotionally react (by laughing, cursing, lying, etc) under different circumstances.

Similarly, Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) ordered:

«من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر، فإذا شهد أمراً فليتكلم
بخيرٍ أو ليسكت، واستوصوا بالنساء، فإن المرأةَ خلقت من

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* no. 5186.

ضلعٍ، وإن أعوج شيءٍ في الضِّلعِ أعلاه؛ إن ذهبتَ تقيمه
كسرتَه، وإن تركتَه لم يزلْ أعوَجَ. ٱستوصوا بالنساء خيراً.»

**‹He who believes in Allāh and the Last Day, when witnessing a matter, should say a good thing or remain silent. Take good care of women, because the woman was created from a rib, and the most curved part of a rib is the top part. So if you insist on straightening it you break it, and if you leave it, it will remain bent. So take good care of women.›** [1]

The advice in this report in regard to saying good things confirms what we have pointed out — that the head, being the source of speech, is also the source of difference between the man and woman and is the thing of which they both need to be watchful.

Samurah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن المرأة خلقت من ضلع، وإنّك إن ترد إقامة
الضِّلعِ تكسرْها، فدارِها تعِشْ بها.»

**‹The woman was created from a rib. If you try to straighten the rib, you would break it. So be kind to her, you would then live in joy with her.›** [2]

In this report, the Prophet (ﷺ) describes forcing a woman to change some of her attitudes as the breaking of a rib, and breaking the rib here means divorce. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن المرأة خُلقت من ضِلعٍ، لن تستقيمَ لكَ على طريقة.
فإن استمتعتَ بها، ٱستمتعت بها وبها عِوَج؛

1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1944).

«وإن ذهبتَ تقيمُها كسرتها، وكسرُها طلاقُها.»

**‹The woman was created from a rib. She will not be straight according to your way. If you want to enjoy her, you will have to enjoy her with her twist. And if you try to straighten her, you would break her: and breaking her is divorcing her.›** [1]

#### LOOKING AT THE WIFE'S BETTER SIDE

We conclude from the above that a man should overlook some of his wife's mistakes — as long as they are not sins. The Prophet (ﷺ) indicated that changing some of a woman's traits is difficult or even impossible.

Just like the man, a woman is not perfect. To enjoy the marriage, the man must forgive and overlook some of his wife's actions that he dislikes. At the same time, he should acknowledge her actions that he likes. Surely, in most cases, her good points will overwhelm the bad ones. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُواْ شَيْـًٔا
وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ١٩

**«Even if you dislike them (your wives), perhaps you dislike something in which Allāh has placed much good.»** [2]

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يفركنَّ مؤمنٌ مؤمنةً؛ إن كره منها خُلُقاً رضي منها غيرَه.»

**‹Let not a believing man hate a believing woman; if he dislikes one of her traits, he would be pleased by others.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by Muslim and at-Tirmiṯī.

2 *An-Nisāʾ* 4:19.

3 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

Dwelling only on the bad side while ignoring the good side is a certain way to destroying the marriage. If men ignore this fact, misery and depression will fill their marriage, and this may lead to divorce.

### ENTERTAINING THE WIFE

It is recommended for a man to be playful with his wife and do lawful things that would entertain her and bring joy to her heart. This was the practice of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) with his wives, as is extensively reported by ʿĀ'ishah and other Mothers of the Believers (ﷺ). A good example is the *ḥadīth* about Umm Zarʿ, presented at the end of this book.

Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh and Jābir Bin ʿUmayr (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كل شيء ليس فيه ذكر اللهِ فهو لغو وسهو ولعب، إلا أربعَ خصال: ملاعبةَ الرجلِ أمرأتَه، وتأديبَ الرجلِ فرسَه، ومشيَه بين الغرضين، وتعليمَ الرجلِ السباحةَ.»

**‹Everything that does not involve remembrance of Allāh is futile, senseless, and wasted — except for four acts: a man entertaining his wife, a man training his horse, a man walking between the two posts (when practicing archery), and teaching swimming to another man.›** [1]

### GIVING *SALĀM* TO THE WIFE AND FAMILY

A Muslim is required to give *salām* to other Muslims when he meets them. This obligation is confirmed even more with one's own family. Instead of using non-Islāmic greetings, such as, "Hi," "Good Morning," "Bye", "Have a Nice Day," etc., one should use the blessed greeting of Islām.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 4534 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 315).

«إن للإسلام صُوَىً ومناراً كمنار الطريق؛ منها أن تؤمنَ بالله ولا تشركَ به شيئاً، وإقامُ الصلاة، وإيتاءُ الزكاة، وصومُ رمضانَ، وحجُّ البيتِ، والأمرُ بالمعروفِ، والنهيُ عن المنكرِ، وأن تسلّمَ على أهلِكَ إذا دخلتَ عليهم، وأن تسلم على القوم إذا مررت بهم؛ فمن ترك من ذلك شيئاً، فقد ترك سهماً من الإسلام؛ ومن تركَهنّ كلَّهُنّ، فقد ولّى الإسلامَ ظهرهُ.»

**‹Indeed, Islām has landmarks and minarets like road minarets; among them is believing in Allāh and joining nothing (in worship) with Him, establishing the prayer, giving the *zakāh*, fasting in *Ramaḍān*, performing *Ḥajj* to the House, enjoining the right, forbidding the wrong, greeting your family with *salām* when you meet them, and greeting the people with *salām* when you pass by them. Whoever drops one of these has surely dropped a portion of Islām, and whoever drops all of them has surely turned his back on Islām.›** [1]

#### FAIRNESS AND JUSTICE

It is an obligation on the husband, being the chief of the family, to treat his wife and family with fairness and justice. Failing to do so is an indication of his failure in running the family.

The husband should not use his material or physical superiority to oppress his wife. We have discussed in the previous chapter the prohibition of oppression. Here, we only cite again the *ḥadīth* of Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh and ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar (ﷺ) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اتّقوا الظُلمَ، فإن الظُلمَ ظُلماتٌ يوم القيامةِ.»

1 Recorded by Ibn Salām (in *al-Īmān*), al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 333).

**‹Avoid oppression, because oppression will result in deep darkness on the Day of Resurrection.›** [1]

## Coping with Multiple Wives

### Fairness Is a Condition for Polygamy

Even though Islām permits marrying up to four wives, it conditions that with justice. Allāh says:

﴿وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلاَّ تُقْسِطُواْ فِي ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ فَٱنكِحُواْ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَـٰثَ وَرُبَـٰعَ، فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلاَّ تَعْدِلُواْ فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ. ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلاَّ تَعُولُواْ﴾ النساء ٣

**«If you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry whatever pleases you of other women: two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just (with them) then (marry) only one woman, or those that your right hands possess (of captives and slaves). That is better in preventing you from doing injustice.»** [2]

Thus, if a man who cannot be fair with multiple wives, he is not allowed to marry more than one. "Fairness" or "justice" here refers to material justice, which includes giving them equal turns, being equitable with them in regard to food, clothing, and dwelling, etc.

### Equal Turns

A man with multiple wives is required to give them equal turns. This means spending an equal number of nights with each wife. This rule may not be violated except in three cases:

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1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 *An-Nisā'* 4:3.

1. If the husband is going on a journey in which he can only take one wife, he should choose by lot which of his wives will be his companion. This was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice, as is reported by ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها):

> "When the Prophet (ﷺ) intended to go on a journey, he would draw lots among his wives, and would travel with the winner." [1]

2. One of the wives may choose to give up her turn for another wife, as Sawdah did for ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) [2].

3. On her wedding, a newly-wed wife gets seven consecutive nights with her husband if she is a virgin, and three consecutive nights if she is not.

   Umm Salamah and Anas (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

   «للبكر سبعٌ وللثيِّبِ ثلاثٌ.»

   **‹A virgin (bride) gets seven (additional) nights (with her husband), and a non-virgin gets three.›** [3]

   Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) also reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) married her, he stayed with her for three nights and then said to her:

   «ليس بكِ هوانٌ على أهلِكِ. إن شِئتِ سبَّعتُ عندَكِ
   وسبّعتُ لنسائي، وإن شئتِ ثلّثتُ ثم دُرْتُ.»

   **‹You are not to be disgraced before your family. If you wish, I will stay seven nights with you, and then stay seven nights with each of my other wives; or if you wish, having completed three nights with you, I will now give turns.›** [4]

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 See the biography of Sawdah in Chapter 5.

3 Recorded by Muslim, Ibn Mājah, and others.

4 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Mājah.

A fascinating incident in regard to the current discussion occurred during the rule of ʿUmar (ﷺ). Ash-Shaʿbī (ﷺ) reported that Kaʿb Bin Sūr was sitting with ʿUmar when a woman came and said, "O Commander of the Believers! I have never seen a man better than my husband. By Allāh, he prays the night and fasts the day." Upon hearing this, ʿUmar praised the woman and supplicated for her, and she shyly departed. Kaʿb then said, "O Commander of the Believers! Shouldn't you have considered her accusation against her husband, for she indeed was quite eloquent in her complaint!" ʿUmar replied, "Why do not you judge between them, for you have understood about her situation that which I did not." Kaʿb said, "I view her situation as if she has three co-wives. My judgment is to allow her husband three days and nights for worship, and one day and night for her." ʿUmar said, "By Allāh, your first understanding (of her situation) is not more amazing than the second (the judgment). I hereby appoint you as judge over al-Baṣrah, and indeed, you are a remarkable judge." [1]

#### PUNISHMENT FOR UNFAIRNESS

Unfairness toward multiple wives is an act of oppression that deserves punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من كانت له امرأتان، فمال إلى أحدِهما (أو فلم يعدِل بينهما)، جاء يومَ القيامة وشقُّه مائل (أو ساقط).»

**‹Whoever has two wives and he leans unfairly toward one of them, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with one of his sides dropping.›** [2]

#### FAIRNESS DOES NOT INVOLVE FEELINGS OF THE HEART

The required fairness among the wives does not apply to love and

1 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwāʾul-Ghalīl* no. 2016).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwāʾul-Ghalīl* no. 2017 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 6515).

affection — which is an uncontrollable inclination of the heart. But even then, Allāh (ﷻ) instructs that a man's strong love for one of his wives should not lead him to totally neglect one or more of his other wives:

﴿وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوٓاْ أَن تَعْدِلُواْ بَيْنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ؛ فَلَا تَمِيلُواْ كُلَّ ٱلْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَٱلْمُعَلَّقَةِ؛ وَإِن تُصْلِحُواْ وَتَتَّقُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ۝﴾ النساء ١٢٩

**«And it will not be within your power to treat your wives with fairness (in affection), even if you should strive to do so. So do not incline completely (toward one) and leave another as if she is suspended (i.e., neither divorced nor attached). And if you amend your affairs and revere Allāh, then indeed Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.»** [1]

A commonly cited *ḥadīth* concerning the current discussion is reported from ʿĀ'ishah (﵂) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to equally allot the days among his wives and then say, "O Allāh! This is my allotment in regard to what I can control, so do not blame me for that which You control but I cannot (i.e., love)." This *ḥadīth* is unauthentic. [2]

It should be noted that some people with limited Islāmic knowledge argue that this *āyah* (*an-Nisā'* 129) cancels the previous *āyah* (*an-Nisā'* 3), concluding that polygamy is therefore prohibited in Islām! Such a conclusion results from their misunderstanding that the two *āyāt* refer to two different and distinctive types of fairness.

## Company and Intimacy

The wife has a right on her husband for emotional and physical

1 *An-Nisā'* 4:129.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be weak by al-Albānī (*Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2018).

gratification. As we have seen in the above *āyah* (*an-Nisā'* 129), it is not permissible for a man to neglect his wife so that she would be in a suspended state, not enjoying any of his love and affection. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr Bin al-ʿAṣ (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to him:

«يا عبدَ الله! ألم أُخْبَرْ أنكَ تصومُ النهارَ وتقومُ الليلَ؟ فلا تَفعلْ، فإنّكَ إذا فعلتَ ذلِكَ هُجِمَتْ عينُكَ، وتَفِهتْ نفسُكَ، فَصُمْ وأفطِرْ، وَقُمْ ونَمْ، فإن لجسدِكَ عليْكَ حقاً، وإن لعينِكَ عَليكَ حَقاً، وإن لزوجِكَ عليْكَ حَقاً. وإن بحسْبِكَ أن تصُومَ من كل شهر ثلاثةَ أيام، فإن لكَ بكل حسنةٍ عشرُ أمثالِها، فإن ذَلكَ صيَامُ الدهر كلِّهِ.»

**‹O ʿAbdullāh: Have I not been informed that you fast the days and stand the nights (in prayer)? Do not do this, because it would tire your eyes and weaken your body. So, fast (on some days) and break your fast (on others); and get up (for the night prayer) and sleep; for, indeed, your body has a right upon you, your eyes have a right upon you, and your wife has a right upon you. Indeed, it would suffice you to fast three days from each month, because you get for each good deed ten times its worth; thus, that would count as fasting the whole time.›**

ʿAbdullāh said, "But I find in myself the strength to do more." He (ﷺ) replied:

«فصم صيامَ نبيِّ اللهِ داودَ ولا تزِد عليه: نصفَ الدهر.»

**‹Fast then the way that Allāh's prophet Dāwūd (عليه السلام) fasted, and do not add to it: half the time (i.e. every other day).›** [1]

We have cited additional *ḥadīth*s relating to this in the first book

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

of this series. [1]

## Service and Help

As we will see in the next chapter, it is more of the wife's than the husband's responsibility to perform the various chores within the home. However, this does not mean that the man should be absolutely reluctant to extend a helping hand to his wife. To the contrary, helping her is an expression of his love and compassion. A common excuse, "I have no time for that," is usually a false one. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was the busiest of men. He conveyed the Message, led the armies, ruled the Muslims, and took care of all his wives. Furthermore, when he was at home, he would be at the service of his family! Al-Aswad reported that he asked ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), "What did the Prophet (ﷺ) do at home?" She said:

"كان يكون في مِهنَة (أو خدمة) أهله. فإذا حضرت الصلاة خرج إلى الصلاة."

> "He used to be at the service of his family; and when it was time for prayer, he would go out to pray." [2]

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was also asked, "What did Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) do at home?" She replied:

"كان بشراً من البشر، يفلي ثوبه، ويحلب شاته، ويخدم نفسه."

> "He acted like other men; he would mend his clothes, milk his goat, and serve himself." [3]

## Discipline

A leader will inevitably have to deal with the "tough" job of discipline.

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1 See "The Quest for Love & Mercy" by the author.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 671).

Discipline is an important process that must be properly implemented. It has its rules and regulations. Violating those rules would undermine or invalidate the whole process, and may result in more damage than good.

The man, being the leader of the family, has the obligation of enforcing the "family law" for the well-being of the family. The rules of discipline between the man and his wife have been set by Allāh (ﷻ) in His Book and in His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah.

In the following, Allāh (ﷻ) mentions four main steps for dealing with a rebellious wife (who insists on violating Allāh's commands):

﴿وَٱلَّٰتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ، فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا؛ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا ۝ وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَٱبْعَثُوا۟ حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِۦ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا؛ إِن يُرِيدَآ إِصْلَٰحًا يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا؛ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ٣٤-٣٥

> **«But those women from whom you fear defiance — (first) admonish them; then (if they persist), forsake them in bed; and (finally,) strike them. If they then obey you, seek no means against them. Indeed, Allāh is ever Exalted and Great. And if you fear dissension between the two of them, appoint an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from hers. If they both desire reconciliation, Allāh will facilitate it between them. Indeed, Allāh is Knowing and Acquainted.»** [1]

Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (رحمه الله) said:

> "Among the best of what I heard in explanation of this *āyah* is the saying of Saʿīd Bin Jubayr, 'He (the husband) would admonish her. If she complies (he should stop there), otherwise, he would desert her. If she complies (he should stop there), otherwise, he would hit her. If she complies (he should stop there),

1 *An-Nisāʾ* 4:34-35.

> otherwise, he would seek arbitration, with an arbitrator appointed from each side. They (the arbitrators) would see who is causing the problem; at that point, the marriage could be terminated.'" [1]

Ibn Kathīr commented on the words, "Exalted and Great" in the first *āyah* (34) saying:

> "This carries a strong warning to the men who transgress over women without a reason. Indeed, Allāh, the Exalted and Great, is then the women's protector, and he will surely take revenge against anyone who oppresses them or transgresses over them." [2]

#### ADMONISHMENT

From the above *āyah*, we see that the first step in discipline is admonishment. One may not go to the next step before performing this step. And admonishment should be conducted earnestly, in a manner satisfying the proper etiquettes of commanding the good and forbidding the wrong.

Laqīṭ Bin Ṣabirah (ﷺ) reported that he said to the Prophet (ﷺ), "O Allāh's Messenger! I have a wife who has something in her tongue (i.e., she has offensive language)." The Prophet (ﷺ) proposed, «طلقها.» **‹Divorce her.›** He said, "I have children from her, and we have been together for a long time." He (ﷺ) said:

«مُرها، فإن يكُ فيها خيرٌ فستفعلُ. ولا تضربْ ظعينتَكَ كضرب أمتِك.»

> **‹Admonish her. If there is good in her, she will obey. Do not hit your wife like you would hit a slave girl.›** [3]

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1 *Aḥkām ul-Qurʾān* 1:420.

2 *Tafṣir ul-Qurʾān il-ʿAẓīm.*

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 3260 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5870).

### ABANDONMENT

If admonishment fails and the wife persists in her wrong behavior, the husband may go to the next step, which is abandoning her bed. This is a strong disciplinary action that would normally shake the woman's being and make her realize that her husband is willing to forsake her bed and charms because of her rebellious behavior, which is often a sufficient reason for her to take heed and comply.

The Prophet (ﷺ) practiced this form of discipline on some occasions. We will see in our discussion of the Mothers of the Believers that he (ﷺ) once abandoned ʿĀ'ishah and Ḥafṣah. On another occasion, he abandoned all of his wives for one month because they asked for additional financial support. Allāh (ﷻ) then revealed:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ: "إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ۝ وَإِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ ٱلْآخِرَةَ، فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا." ۝﴾ الأحزاب ٢٨-٢٩

> **«O Prophet! Say to your wives, "If you should desire the worldly life and its adornment, come, I will provide for you and give you a gracious release. But if you should desire Allāh and His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter — then indeed, Allāh has prepared for the doers of good among you a great reward.»** [1]

### PERMISSION OF HITTING

As we have seen in the above *āyah* of *Sūrat un-Nisā'* (4:34), if the first two steps do not work with the wife and she continues to be disobedient and rebellious, the husband may resort to hitting her.

However, hitting has restrictions: it should not be painful, should not leave marks on the body, and should avoid the face, head, and abdomen. ʿAmr Bin al-Aḥwaṣ al-Jushamī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:28-29.

«ألا واستوصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإنهن عوانٍ عندكم، ليس تملكون منهن شيئاً غير ذلك، إلا أن يأتين بفاحشة مبينة. فإن فعلن فاهجروهن في المضاجع، واضربوهن ضرباً غير مبرِّح، فإن أطعنكم فلا تبغوا عليهن سبيلاً.»

**‹Lo! Take good care of women, for they surely are captives under your charge, and you do not possess of them any more than this (subordination) — unless they commit a manifest sin. If they do, abandon them in sleep, and beat them lightly. If they obey you, do not apply any further punishment.›** [1]

ʿAṭāʾ (رحمه الله) reported that he asked Ibn ʿAbbāṣ (رضي الله عنهما), "What is 'light hitting'?" He replied, "It is to hit with a *siwāk* [2] stick or something like it." [3]

One may ask, "What is the benefit of light hitting?" The answer is that a woman normally has a sensitive nature; the slightest show of discourtesy to her would tremendously affect her and cause her to rethink her actions. If, on the other hand, light hitting does not work with her, brutal hitting won't.

We should keep in mind that the purpose of hitting is to correct and remind, and not to avenge or harm.

#### DISAPPROVAL OF HITTING

Even though a man is allowed to hit his wife in certain situations, hitting her is disliked in Islām and is considered the resort of the helpless. Iyās Bin ʿAbdillāh ad-Dawsī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تضربوا إماءَ اللهِ.»

**‹Do not hit Allāh's female slaves (i.e., the women)›**

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1 Recorded by at-Tirmiṯhī, an-Nasāʾī, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7880 & *Irwāʾul-Ghalīl* no. 2030).

2 *Siwāk* or *miswāk* A thin and short stick (usually about 6 inches or 20 cm long), cut from the roots of a desert tree called *arāk*, and used to clean the teeth.

3 Al-Qurṭubī's "*Al-Jāmiʿ li-Aḥkām il-Qurʾān*" 5:172.

Later on, ʿUmar came to the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, "The women have rebelled against their husbands." So he (ﷺ) gave the men permission to hit them. On the following day, many women came to Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) houses (i.e., his wives') complaining. So he addressed the people saying:

«لقد طاف الليلةَ بآلِ محمدٍ نساءٌ كثيرٌ (سبعون ٱمرأةٍ)، كلُّهُنّ تشكو زوجَها من الضربِ، وأيْمُ اللهِ لا تجدون أولٰئكَ خَيارَكُم.»

**‹Indeed, a large number of (or seventy) women have come to the houses of Muḥammad's families, all of them complaining that their husbands had beat them. By Allāh, you will not find that those (who hit their wives) are the best among you.›** [1]

Our Prophet and example (ﷺ), never hit any of his wives. ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

"ما ضَرَبَ رَسولُ اللهِ بيده امرأةً قط، ولا خادماً، ولا ضربَ شيئاً، إلا أن يجاهدَ في سبيل الله."

"Never did Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) hit with his hand a women, a servant, or anyone else — except during fighting for Allāh's cause." [2]

It is inconceivable how a man could harshly hit his wife and then expect her to render intimate pleasures to him! ʿAbdullāh Bin Zamʿah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يعمَدُ أحدُكم فيجلِدَ ٱمرأتَه جَلْدَ البعير، ولعله يضاجعُها في آخر يومه.»

**‹(How could) one of you turn to his wife and whip her like whipping a camel and then make love to her**

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5137).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

**at the end of the day!?»** [1]

Many husbands abuse their wives and justify this by the texts that command the wife to obey the husband or that allow him to discipline her. Those husbands must understand that discipline is a well-regulated matter in Islām, and has no room for abuse. An abusive husband is indeed an oppressor, and what we have mentioned regarding oppressors applies to him. Furthermore, an abused wife has the full right to turn to justice and seek punishment of her abusive husband.

### DIVORCE

We have seen above that the last step in the discipline process is arbitration. If that does not work, nothing would be left but divorce.

Divorce is a right for the husband. But it is his obligation to apply it in the right measure and when the necessity arises. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) had nine wives at one time. Yet, we know of only one case where he used this "privilege". [2]

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 See the biography of Ḥafṣah later in this book.

# CHAPTER 3

# THE WIFE'S OBLIGATIONS

## The Great Right of the Husband

### THE MAN'S DEGREE OVER THE WOMAN

Allāh (ﷻ) has appointed the man as the usual head of the family:

﴿ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنفَقُواْ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ. فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ. وَٱلَّٰتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ، فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلاَ تَبْغُواْ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلاً. إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا ۝﴾ النساء ٣٤

**«Men are in charge of women by (right of) what (qualities) Allāh has given one over the other and what they spend (in support) from their wealth. So, righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allāh), guarding in (their husband's) absence what Allāh commands them to guard (their husband's honor, property, secrets, etc.) But those women from whom you fear defiance — first admonish them; then (if they persist), forsake them in bed; and (as a last resort,) strike them. But if they obey you, seek no means against them. Indeed, Allāh is ever Exalted and Great.»** [1]

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1 *An-Nisā'* 4:34.

Ibn Kathīr (رحمه الله) commented on this, "The man is the woman's custodian; he is her supervisor, chief, leader, and the one who corrects her if she deviates."

This gives the man a major responsibility in running the family, and qualifies him for a number of rights — which should be rendered to him by the other family members and, above all, his wife. This is the "degree" or "edge" over the woman that Allāh assigned to the man, as He (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

﴿وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ. وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝﴾ البقرة ٢٢٨

> **«And due to them (the wives) is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men have a degree over them (in responsibility and authority). Allāh is Mighty and Wise.»** [1]

It must be understood that this degree is a degree of responsibility before being a degree of homage. The man earns it by being truly worthy of the trust that Allāh (عز وجل) conferred on him, and loses it by neglecting this trust.

#### SUBMISSION TO THE HUSBAND'S AUTHORITY

As we discussed above, Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has divided the responsibilities and duties within the family, and has set the man as the one in authority. The woman should not reject or challenge that authority. Rather, she should accept it in fulfillment of Allāh's commands. She should view her submission to her husband's authority as a submission to Allāh's decree. This submission should almost reach the degree of prostrating to her husband. ʿĀ'ishah, Abū Hurayrah, Muʿāth, and Buraydah (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو كنت آمراً أحداً أن يسجُد لأحدٍ لأمرتُ المرأةَ أن تسجُدَ لزوجها.»

**‹Were I to order a person to prostrate before**

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:228.

**another person, I would have ordered the woman to prostrate before her husband.›** [1]

As stated above, a woman's obedience to her husband is part of her obedience to Allāh (ﷻ). Therefore, giving him his rights is part of fulfilling Allāh's rights. ʿAbdullāh Bin Abī Awfā reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو كنت آمراً أحداً أن يسجُد لغير الله لأمرتُ المرأةَ أن تسجُدَ لزوجها. والذي نفسُ محمد بيده، لا تؤدي المرأة حق ربها حتى تُؤدي حق زوجها كله، حتى لو سألها نفسَها وهي على قَتَب لم تمنعْه.»

**‹Were I to command a person to prostrate to other than Allāh, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband. By the One in Whose hand is Muḥammad's soul, a woman would not fulfill her Lord's right until she had completely fulfilled her husband's right — even if he were to ask her for herself while she is riding on a camel, she should not refuse.›** [2]

### Absolute Willingness to Serve and Cooperate

The woman should demonstrate her acceptance of her husband's authority by showing willingness to serve him to her best ability. Muʿāth Bin Jabal (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو تعلم المرأةُ حق الزوج لم تقعد ما حضَرَ غداؤه وعشاؤه حتى يفرُغ منه.»

**‹If a woman knew her husband's right, she would not sit while he is eating his dinner or supper until**

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 1998 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5239, 5294).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and Ibn Ḥibbān. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 1998 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5295).

**he finishes eating.›** [1]

The Prophet (ﷺ) expresses the woman's absolute submission to her husband's authority in a *ḥadīth* that may appear repulsive to some. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حق الزوج على زوجته أن لو كانت به قرحةٌ فلحَسَتْها ما أدت حقَّه.»

**‹A husband's right upon his wife is such that if he had an ulcer and she licked it for him, she would not fulfill his right by that.›** [2]

Similarly, Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يصلحُ لبشر أن يسجد لبشر. ولو صلَحَ أن يسجُد بشرٌ لبشرٍ، لأمرتُ المرأة أن تسجدَ لزوجها من عِظَم حقّه عليها. والذي نفسي بيده، لو أنّ من قدمِهِ إلى مَفرِق رأسه قرحةً تنْبَجِسُ بالقيح والصديد، ثم أقبلَت تلحسه، ما أدّت حقه.»

**‹It is not permissible for a human being to prostrate to another human being. Were it permissible for a human being to prostrate to another human being, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband because of his great right upon her. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if he (the husband) had, from his feet to the top of his head, an ulcer oozing blood and pus, and she came to lick it off for him, she would not have fulfilled his right.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Bazzār. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 5259).

2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 3148).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 7725).

This description emphasizes the great right of the husband upon his wife; even if she was able to do for him such a repugnant act as is described here, she still would have not fulfilled his right. In other words: most women cannot normally fulfill their husband's right.

#### IS THE HUSBAND BETTER?

One may wonder, "What is so great about the husband that the woman is required to perform heroic or impossible acts to please him?" In answering this question, we have to understand the following principles:

1. The rights granted to the husband are necessary for the peaceful and productive running of the family.

2. The above *ḥadīth*s refer to a man who fulfills all of his responsibilities as husband and family-head. He constantly offers to his wife and children guidance, protection, support, nurturing, and so on. Neglecting any of that would proportionally reduce his rights upon his wife.

3. When the husband fulfills his responsibilities toward his wife as outlined above, he becomes a true benefactor who deserves her full gratitude and support.

Therefore, the husband's rights do not necessarily mean that he is better than the wife. He is of no higher status or of a better species. Both of them descend from Ādam (ﷺ), and Ādam was made from dirt. Piety and righteousness are what determines who is truly better than the other. His rights are set by Allāh to guarantee the well-being and success of their relationship and their family. Even though the wife is normally subordinate to her husband in the family structure, she may be far better than him in Allāh's sight, especially when she fulfills her obligations in a way that is pleasing to Allāh (ﷻ).

## Kindness Toward the Husband

Part of a woman's fulfillment of her husband's rights is to treat him in a good and honorable way, and to avoid harming him.

### SHOWING GRATITUDE

As we have discussed above, the husband normally has many favors upon his wife. These favors are not limited to the financial privilege which, even though it is usually true, is not always the case. A woman should show gratitude to her husband and should return his favors in the form of kindness and good treatment.

A great example is Khadījah (ﷺ), who was wealthier than the Prophet (ﷺ). Her financial advantage, though, did not make her arrogant or ungrateful to her husband. Rather, she was a great example of modesty and kindness that the Prophet (ﷺ) continued to remember all his life.

A woman who is reluctant to admit her husband's favors displeases her Lord (ﷻ), even before she displeases her husband. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا ينظرُ اللهُ إلى ٱمرأةٍ لا تشكُرُ لزوجها، وهي لا تستغني عنه.»

**‹Allāh does not look (with mercy) at a woman who is not grateful to her husband when she cannot live without him.›** [1]

Asmāʾ Bint Zayd (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) passed by her while she was with other young girls of her age. He addressed them saying, «إياكنّ وكفرَ المُنَعَّمين» **‹Avoid the ingratitude of those who have been favored.›** She asked him, "O Allāh's Messenger! What is the ingratitude of those who have been favored?" He (ﷺ) explained:

«لعل إحداكن تطول أيْمَتُها من أبويها، ثُم يرزقُها اللهُ زَوجاً صالحاً، ويرزقُها منه ولداً، فتغضبُ الغضبةَ فتكفر، فتقول:

1 Recorded by an-Nasāʾī (in *al-Kubrā*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 289).

"ما رأيتُ مِنكَ خيراً قطّ."»

**‹One of you might stay with her parents for a long time (before marriage). Allāh would then grant her a righteous husband, and grant her children from him. She would then get angry for some reason and turn ungrateful, saying to him, "I have never seen any good from you."›** [1]

ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿUmar, Abū Hurayrah, and Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to the women:

«يا معشرَ النِّساءِ! تصدَّقنَ وأكثِرنَ من الاستغفار، فإني رأيتُكُنّ أكثرَ أهلِ النارِ: إنكُنّ تُكثرنَ اللعنَ، وتكفُرن العشيرَ. ما رأيتُ من ناقصاتِ عقلٍ ودينٍ أغلَبَ لذي لُبٍ مِنكُنّ. أما نُقصان العقل، فشهادةُ امرأتينِ بشَهادةِ رجلٍ؛ وأما نقصان الدين، فتمكثُ أياماً لا تُصلي، وتُفطر في رمضان.»

**‹O women! Give charity and ask for Allāh's forgiveness abundantly, for I have seen you (women) to be the majority of the Fire's people. (That is because) you frequently curse, and you are ungrateful to your husbands.**

**I have not seen ones with incomplete intellect and religion who are more overpowering to a man of reason than you are!**

**As for incomplete intellect: it is that two women's testimonies equate one man's. And as for incomplete religion: it is that she stays for a number of days without prayer, and she breaks her fast during *Ramaḍān*.›** [2]

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*), Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 823).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

### THE WOMAN'S MENTAL AND RELIGIOUS "DEFICIENCIES"

It is important to note the following in regard to the above *ḥadīth*:

1. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) described the woman as being mentally deficient in comparison with the man. This should not be taken out of context. Her deficiency is derived from the fact that Allāh (ﷻ) requires two female witnesses in the place of one male, so that one of them would possibly remind the other if she forgets [1]. This "forgetting" is caused by the woman usually being more emotional than the man, and more involved in the household affairs and less in the affairs of the outside world. Thus, the Prophet's (ﷺ) statement is an expression of a clear difference between the man's and woman's natures. It emphasizes that, even though she is considered more emotional and less "intellectual", and he is considered less emotional and more "intellectual", she still can defeat him in his own arena!

2. Similarly, the woman's description of being religiously deficient is explained by that she does not pray or fast during her menses. Thus, it is again to indicate that, even though the man is supposedly in a stronger position of being religious because he prays and fasts more, the woman can still overpower him!

### KINDNESS TO THE HUSBAND IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

The woman's treatment of her husband could be her passport to *Jannah* (or to the hellfire).

Ḥuṣayn Bin Miḥṣan (ﷺ) reported that one of his paternal aunts visited the Prophet (ﷺ). He asked her, «أي هذه! أذات بعل؟» **‹O Woman, do you have a husband?›** She replied, "Yes." He asked, «كيف أنتِ له؟» **‹How do you treat him?›** She replied, "As much as I can, I do not deny him any request." He (ﷺ) said:

«فانظري أين أنتِ منه، فإنما هو جنتُكِ ونارُكِ.»

1 See *al-Baqarah* 2:282.

**‹Check then what is your position with him, because he is either your (way to) *Jannah* or the Fire.›** [1]

### THE BEST OF WOMEN

The best of women is she who is good and kind to her husband. Abū Uthaynah aṣ-Ṣadafī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خيرُ نسائكم الولود الودود، المُواسيةُ المُواتِية، إذا اتَّقَينَ الله.
وشر نسائكم المتبرّجاتُ المتخيِّلاتُ، وهن المنافقات. لا يدخل الجنةَ
منهنّ إلا مثلُ الغراب الأعصمِ.»

**‹The best of your women are those who are bearers of many children, loving (to their husbands), comforting, and tolerant — provided that they have *taqwā* of Allāh.**

**And the worst of your women are those who display their charms and swagger in their walk — those are hypocrites indeed. None of them (the women) will enter *Jannah* except (as rarely) as are the crows that have red beaks and legs.›** [2]

Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ألا أخبرُكم برجالِكم من أهل الجنةِ؟ النبي في الجنةِ، والصِّدّيقُ
في الجنةِ، والشهيدُ في الجنةِ، والمولودُ في الجنةِ، والرجلُ يزورُ أخاه
في ناحيةِ المِصر، لا يزوره إلا للهِ عز وجل. ونساؤكم من أهل الجنةِ:
الودودُ الولودُ العَؤود على زوجها، التي إذا غضب جاءت حتى

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 1509).

2 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī (in *as-Sunan*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3330 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1849). The last part of it (about the crow) is also recorded by Aḥmad and others from ʿAmr Bin al-ʿĀṣ (ﷺ) and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1850).

تضعَ يدَها في يدِه وتقول: "لا أذوقُ غَمْضاً حتى ترضى." »

**‹Should I not tell you of your men who will be in *Jannah*? The prophets will be in *Jannah*; the *ṣiddīq*s (most truthful) will be in *Jannah*; the *shahīd*s (martyrs) will be in *Jannah*; a baby (dying before puberty) will be in *Jannah*; and a man who visits his brother in a distant locality, visiting him only for the sake of Allāh (ﷻ).**

**As for your women who will be in *Jannah*, they include a woman who is loving toward her husband, who bears many children for him, and who shows him devoted attention; and when he becomes angry, she comes to him, puts her hand in his, and says, "I will not taste any sleep until you are happy."›** [1]

### Prohibition of Harming the Husband

A woman who harms her husband receives curses from the women of *Jannah*. That is an indication of Allāh's displeasure with her.

Muʿāth Bin Jabal (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تؤذي ٱمرأة زوجها في الدنيا إلا قالت زوجتُه من الحور العين:

"لا تؤذيه قاتلك ٱللهُ، فإنما هو عندَكِ دخيلٌ يوشك أن يفارقَكِ إلينا." »

**‹Whenever a woman harms her (righteous) husband in the worldly life, his (future) wife from *al-ḥur ul-ʿīn* (the wide-eyed beauties of *Jannah*) says, "Do not harm him, may Allāh fight you! He is only staying temporarily with you, and will soon come to us."›** [2]

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1 Recorded by Tammām ar-Rāzī, Ibn ʿAsākir, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 287).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7192 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 173).

## Obeying the Husband

Indeed, obeying the husband is an obligation on the women in Islām; it is an act of worship that she presents to Allāh (ﷻ) alone, only seeking his pleasure and acceptance. We have seen numerous texts instructing the woman to obey her husband and cooperate well with him in maintaining the family. There are other texts that are even more explicit in this regard.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا صلتِ المرأةُ خمسَها، وصامَت شهرَها، وَحَصنَت فرجَها، وأطاعت زوجَها، قيل لها: "ٱدخلي الجنةَ من أي أبوابِ الجنةِ شئتِ."»

**‹When a woman prays her five (prayers), fasts her month (*Ramaḍān*), preserves her chastity, and obeys her husband, she will be told (on the Day of Judgment), "Enter *Jannah* from any of its (eight) gates."›** [1]

Similarly, Anas, ʿAbd ur-Raḥmān az-Zuhrī, and others (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا صلت المرأةُ خمسَها، وصامَت شهرَها، وحفظت فرجَها، وأطاعت زوجَها، دخلت الجنةَ.»

**‹When a woman prays her five (prayers), fasts her month (*Ramaḍān*), preserves her chastity, and obeys her husband, she will enter *Jannah*.›** [2]

On the other hand, disobeying the husband is a great sin that could cause the prayers to be unacceptable by Allāh. Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 660 and *Ādāb uz-Zafāf* p. 286).

2 Recorded by al-Bazzār, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 661 and *Ādāb uz-Zafāf* p. 286).

«اثنانِ لا تُجاوزُ صلاتُهما رؤوسَهُما: عبدٌ آبقٌ من مَواليه حتى يرجِعَ، وامرأةٌ عصت زوجها حَتى ترجعَ.»

**‹There are two individuals whose prayer does not rise above their heads: a slave running away from his masters — until he returns to them, and a woman who disobeys her husband — until she returns (to obedience).›** [1]

### SERVING THE HUSBAND

Part of a wife's obedience to her husband is to serve him to her best ability. That includes performing the daily chores, serving his food, and so on. We again site the *ḥadīth* reported by Muʿāth Bin Jabal (ﷺ) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو تعلم المرأةُ حق الزوج لم تقعد ما حضَرَ غداؤه وعشاؤه حتى يفرُغ منه.»

**‹If a woman knew her husband's right, she would not sit while he is eating his dinner or supper until he finishes eating.›** [2]

No woman is exempt from this responsibility — unless her husband elects to relieve her. Even a woman as noble as the Prophet's (ﷺ) daughter found herself responsible for that.

ʿAlī (ﷺ) reported that his wife Fāṭimah (ﷺ), the Prophet's (ﷺ) daughter, went to the Prophet (ﷺ) complaining about the bad effect of the stone hand-mill on her hand. She did not find him, and left him a message with ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) asking him to give her a maid from among the captives that he had recently received. When ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) told him of his daughter's need, he went to her house, entered, and found her and ʿAlī in bed ready to go to sleep. Fāṭimah started to rise, but he (ﷺ) told her to stay in bed. He sat between them and said:

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1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and aṭ-Ṭabarānī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 136 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 288).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Tabarānī and al-Bazzār. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5259).

«ألا أدلُّكما على خير مما سألتما؟ إذا أخذتما مضاجعَكُما
فسبّحا ثلاثاً وثلاثين، واحْمَدا ثلاثاً وثلاثين، وكبِّرا أربعاً
وثلاثين، فإن ذلك خير لكما من خادم.»

**‹Shall I not direct you to something better than what you have requested? When you go to bed say, "*Subḥan Allāh* — exalted is Allāh," thirty-three times, "*Al-ḥamdu lillāh* — all praise belongs to Allāh," thirty-three times, and, "*Allāhu Akbar* — Allāh is the Greatest," thirty four times. Indeed, that is better for you than a servant.›** [1]

Ibn Qayyim noted, "The wife's serving of her husband is a matter about which there is no doubt. It is not correct to differentiate in this regard between a noble and a low class woman, or between a poor and a rich one. The most noble of all women (Fāṭimah) used to serve her husband. She came complaining to her father (ﷺ) about the hardship she was facing in this regard, but he did not grant her her wish." [2]

#### GUIDELINES FOR OBEDIENCE

There are some important guidelines that must be emphasized in regard to the subject of obedience. The following has mostly been presented in the previous sections or chapters, but we include it here for easy reference.

1. By obeying her husband, a woman would be obeying Allāh (ﷻ) because He required this from her.

2. The women should obey her husband as long as obeying him is within her capacity.

3. The husband should only be obeyed in matters that do not involve disobeying Allāh (ﷻ).

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 *Zād ul-Maʿād* 5:160.

## Doing Things That Please Her Husband

As part of her kindness toward her husband, the woman should do her best to please him — making sure that what she does is not displeasing to Allāh (ﷻ).

### Pleasing Him with Her Appearance

A good woman attempts to please her husband with her appearance. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خير النساءِ التي تسُره إذا نظر، وتطيعه إذا أمر،
ولا تُخَالِفُه في نفسِها ولا مالِها بما يكره.»

**‹The best of women is that who pleases him (i.e. her husband) when he looks at her, obeys him when he orders, and does not subject her person or money to what he dislikes.›** [1]

Similarly, ʿAbdullāh Bin Salām (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked, "Who are the best of women?" He replied:

«خيرُ النساء من تسُرك إذا أبصَرتَ، وتطيعُكَ
إذا أمرتَ، وتحفظُ غيبتَكَ في نفسِها ومالِكَ.»

**‹The best of women is that who pleases you when you look at her, obeys you when you order her, and safeguards you during your absence in regard to herself and your wealth.›** [2]

It is important to emphasize here that "pleasing" the husband can

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasāʾī, and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3298 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1838).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3299 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1838).

only be in a way conforming with Islām, which means that she would not appear or act in a way displeasing to Allāh. The highest form of "pleasing" is realized by being a model practicing Muslim woman: her *hijāb*, modesty, and virtue would all bring great joy and pleasure into a true believer's heart and soul.

#### ADMITTING PEOPLE ONLY WITH HIS PERMISSION

A woman should not allow anyone into her husband's house without his consent. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحل لامرأة أن تصومَ وزوجها شاهد إلا بإذنِهِ

-إلا رمضانَ- ولا تأذنَ في بيته إلا بإذنه.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to fast, while her husband is present, without his permission — except for *Ramaḍān*. Nor is it permissible for her to admit anyone to his house except with his permission.›** [1]

The husband's consent could be implicit. For instance, if a woman is certain that her husband does not object to some of the neighboring women visiting her, she does not have to ask him for a specific permission every time one of them comes to visit her.

#### AVOIDING ASKING FOR DIVORCE WITHOUT REASON

A righteous woman would not ask her husband for divorce without a good reason. Only if she finds that he is causing her a real harm in her faith or well-being would she be justified to seek divorce. The Prophet (ﷺ) warned that the women who ask for divorce without a sound reason would be liable to punishment, and may not enter into *Jannah*. Thawbān (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأةٍ سألت زوجَها الطلاقَ من غير بأسٍ، فحرامٌ عليها رائحة الجنة.»

**‹Any woman who asks her husband for divorce**

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

**without a (serious) reason, the fragrance of *Jannah* will be prohibited for her.›** [1]

Asking the husband for divorce demonstrates ungratefulness, and undermines the husband's authority and efforts toward his wife. It is a blow in his face that is not allowed in Islām without a valid excuse.

#### A MOTHER'S ADVICE TO HER DAUGHTER

The following is an advice from a *Jāhilī* mother to her daughter on her wedding day. It reflects a great and mature experience, and concisely puts in a nutshell the most important actions that a woman should consider in order to please her husband.

Umm Ayās Bint ʿAwf Bin Muslim ash-Shaybānī was given in marriage to ʿAmr Bin Ḥijr, the king of Kindah [2]. Shortly before her wedding, her mother Umāmah Bint al-Ḥārith took her aside and told her:

> "O my daughter! If the advice were to be left off the virtuous and well-mannered, you would be in no need of advice. However, the advice reminds the forgetful and guides the wise. And if a woman were to forsake marriage because of her parents' wealth or their fondness of her, you would be in least need for marriage. However, the women have been made for the men, and for them were the men made.
>
> O my daughter! You are now departing from the climate where you lived, and the nest where you grew, to an unfamiliar domicile and companion. By virtue of you husband's custody, he is now a watcher and master over you. So be a maid to him, and he will surely be your servant. Be his earth (in submission), and he will be your sky (in protection). Preserve for him ten qualities, and they will be a treasure for you:

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 2706 & *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2035).

2 A Yamanī tribe.

1. Submit to him by showing contentment (in regard to what he gives you).
2. Listen to him and obey him in the best manner.
3. Guard where his eye looks, so that it will not fall on anything ugly from you.
4. Guard what his nose smells, so that he will not smell from you but the best aroma.
5. Respect his meal times, for the attack of hunger is a cause for rage.
6. Respect his sleep times, for the disturbance of sleep is a cause of annoyance.
7. Safeguard his wealth by employing good judgment.
8. Care for his children and servants by employing good planning.
9. Do not disobey any of his commands, for if you do, you would bring resentment into his breast.
10. Do not disclose any of his secrets, for if you do, you would not be secure from his revenge.

Furthermore, do not display joy when he is worried, nor sadness when he is happy, for this will breed hatred. And remember, my daughter, that the more you please him, the more he honors you. And remember that you will not attain what you desire from him unless you give preference to his likes over yours." [1]

## Fulfilling the Husband's Physical Desire

### A Major Obligation

Chastity is a main objective of marriage. A man preserves his chastity by turning his lust toward his wife instead of directing it toward prohibited outlets. It is therefore a great obligation upon the wife to be always willing to help her husband in venting his desire; and it is a

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1 Recorded in *al-Aghānī* by al-Aṣbahānī (partially included in *Tuḥfat ul-ʿArūs*, pp. 91-92).

major sin for her to deny her husband the intimate pleasure that he seeks with her.

ʿAbdullāh Bin Abī Awfā (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«والذي نفس محمدٍ بيده، لا تؤدي المرأةُ حق ربِّها حتى تؤدي حق زوجِها كلَّه، حتى لو سألها نفسَها وهي على قَتَبٍ لم تمنعْه نفسَها.»

**‹By the One that Muḥammad's soul is in His hand, a woman would not truly fulfill the right of her Lord (Allāh) until she fulfills all of her husband's right — even if he was to ask her for herself while she is in a camel's saddle, she should not deny him that.›** [1]

From the above *ḥadīth*, we see that the wife should not hesitate in answering her husband's call, even if that would cause an inconvenience. Similarly, Zayd Bin Arqam (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا دعا الرجلُ امرأته إلى فراشه فلتُجِب، وإن كانت على ظهر قَتَب.»

**‹When a man invites his wife to his bed, she should respond to him, even if she was sitting in a camel's saddle.›** [2]

Ṭalq Bin ʿAlī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا دعا الرجلُ زوجَتَه لحاجته فلتأته، وإن كانت على التنور.»

**‹When a man invites his wife for his (sexual) need, she should go to him, even if she was working at the outdoor oven.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ādāb uz-Zifāf* p. 84).

2 Recorded by al-Bazzār and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1203 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 533).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasāʾī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1202 & *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 534).

**DENIAL OF INTIMATE PLEASURE IS A MAJOR SIN**

Since it is a major obligation upon the wife to fulfill her husband's desire, refusing to do so is a major sin that deserves the angels' curse and Allāh's wrath. Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا دعا الرجل ٱمرأته إلى فراشه، فأبت (فلم تأته)، فبات غضبان عليها، لعنتها الملائكة حتى تصبح (أو يرضى عنها).»

**‹If a man invites his wife to bed and she refuses to come and he sleeps while angry, the angels curse her till the morning.›** [1]

In another report, Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا باتت المرأة هاجرةً فراش زوجها لعَنَتها الملائكةُ حتى تصبح.»

**‹When a woman deserts her husband's bed at night, the angels curse her until the morning.›** [2]

And Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«والذي نفسي بيده، ما من رجلٍ يدعو ٱمرأتَه إلى فراشِه، فتأبى عليه، إلا كان الذي في السماء ساخطاً عليها حتى يرضى عنها.»

**‹By the One in whose hand is my soul, never would a man invite his wife to his bed and she refuses but that the One who is above the heavens would be angry with her until he (her husband) forgives her.›** [3]

Abū Umāmah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ثلاثةٌ لا تُجاوزُ صلاتُهم آذانَهم: العبد الآبِقُ حتى يرجع،

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by Muslim.

وامرأةٌ باتت وزوجها عليها ساخط، وإمامُ قومٍ وهم له كارهون.»

**‹There are three individuals whose prayers do not rise above their ears (i.e., is not accepted): a fleeing slave until he returns (to his master), a woman who spends the night while her husband is angry with her, and a man who leads some people and they dislike him.›** [1]

### No Voluntary Fasting Without His Permission

Since the wife should be ready and willing to fulfill her husband's desire, she is not allowed to fast voluntarily without his permission. The reason for this prohibition is that her "voluntary" fasting could interfere with her "obligatory" fulfillment of his desire.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تصمِ المرأةُ وبعلها شاهدٌ إلا بإذنه، غير رمضان؛ ولا تأذنْ في بيته وهو شاهدٌ إلا بإذنه؛ وما أنفقت من كسبِه من غير أمرِه فإن نصفَ أجرِه له.»

**‹If her husband is present, a woman may not fast without his permission — except for *Ramaḍān*. And if he is present, she may not admit anyone into his house without his permission. And he will surely receive half of the reward for whatever she spends of his earning without his permission.›** [2]

### Moderateness in Worship

Similar to fasting, a wife should avoid performing excessive worship that may interfere with her obligation toward her husband.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (ﷺ) reported that the wife of Ṣafwān Bin al-

1 Recorded by at-Tirmiṯhī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 3057).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

Muʿaṭṭil cam to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) while Ṣafwān and others of the *ṣaḥābah* were with him. She said, "O Allāh's Messenger! My husband Ṣafwān Bin al-Muʿaṭṭil hits me when I pray, forces me to eat when I fast, and he does not pray the *fajr* prayer until the sun rises." The Messenger (ﷺ) asked Ṣafwān about her claims, and he replied, "O Allāh's Messenger! As for saying that I hit her when she prays, it is because she reads two *sūrah*s (after *al-Fātiḥah*), causing me inconvenience — even though I told her not to do so." Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لو كانت سورةً لكفتِ الناسَ.»

**‹If only one *Sūrah* is recited, it would suffice the people.›**

Ṣafwān continued, "As for saying that I force her to break her fast, it is because she frequently fasts (voluntary fasting) — when I am a young man and cannot endure that (because of my desire)." Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تصومنّ امرأةٌ إلا بإذن زوجها.»

**‹A woman may not fast without her husband's permission.›**

Ṣafwān continued, "As for her saying that I do not pray until the sun rises, it is because I am from a family that is known to be like this. We cannot wake up until it is close to sunrise." Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«فإذا استيقظت فصلّ.»

**‹So when you wake up, pray.›** [1]

## Avoiding Suspicious Situations with Other Men

The married life is based on trust. Depending on her conduct, the wife can be a source of honor or depravity for the whole family. In order

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 395 & 2172, and *Irwā'ul-Ghalīl* no. 2004).

to maintain her husband's trust and safeguard his honor, she must avoid all situations that may cause suspicion to him or to other people.

### Avoiding Displaying Her Charms to Other Men

A woman should be modest and plain in her appearance, avoiding everything that could attract the men's eyes or give them evil thoughts.

Fuḍālah Bin ʿUbayd (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ثلاثةٌ لا تسأل عنهم: رجلٌ فارق الجماعةَ وعصى إمامه ومات عاصياً، وأمةٌ أو عبدٌ أبقَ من سيده فمات، وامرأةٌ غاب عنها زوجُها وقد كفاها مؤنَةَ الدنيا فتبرّجت بعده؛ فلا تسأل عنهم.»

**‹There are three (types of) individuals that you need not ask about (because they are doomed): a man who departs from the *Jamāʿah*, disobeys his *imām* (ruler), and dies in a state of disobedience; a female or male slave who runs away from his master and dies in that (fugitive) state; and a woman that, when her husband is absent — even though he had sufficed her from all worldly worries — she adorns herself in his absence (to other men). So, you need not ask about those.›** [1]

### Avoiding Unnecessary Talk with Other Men

A woman should not talk to men without her husband's permission (whether explicit or implicit). Even then, her talking with other men should be limited, formal, and to the point.

ʿAmr Bin al-ʿAṣ (ﷺ) reported:

"نهى أن تُكلَّمَ النساءُ إلا بإذن أزواجهن."

"The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited speaking to woman

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*) and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3058 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 542).

without their husbands' permission."[1]

#### Avoiding Privacy with Other Men

The woman may not be alone in a private place with a man who is neither her husband nor her *maḥram*.

Ibn ʿUmar (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يدخلنّ رجلٌ بعد يومي هذا على مُغَيَّبةٍ إلا ومعه رجلٌ أو اثنان.»

**‹Let no man enter, after this day, to the privacy of a woman unless he has with him one or two other men.›**[2]

Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تسافر المرأة إلا مع ذي محرم، ولا يدخل عليها رجل إلا معها محرم.»

**‹A woman may not travel except with a *maḥram*. And no (unrelated) man may come into her presence unless she has a *maḥram* with her.›**[3]

#### Avoiding Traveling without *Maḥrams*

A woman may not travel without a *maḥram*. In the state of travel, a person is weaker and more liable to attacks and temptations — even in today's modernized travel. Therefore, a woman must have a man with her to protect and help her.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحل لامرأة أن تسافرَ إلا ومعها ذو محرم منها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to travel except in**

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 6813 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 652).

2 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**the company of a *maḥram*.›** [1]

And Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تسافرُ المرأةُ بريداً إلا ومعها محرم يحْرُمُ عليها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to travel the distance of a *barīd* (one mailing station)** [2] **except in the company of a *maḥram* who is prohibited for her (to marry).›** [3]

### Avoiding Undressing Outside her Home

A woman should not undress outside her home. Some women had the practice of undressing and taking a bath in public facilities for females. The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited that and indicated that a woman who does it would not deserve Allāh's cover and protection.

Abū al-Malīḥ al-Huthalī (ﷺ) reported that some women from Ḥimṣ [4] visited ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ). She asked them, "Are you from the people who allow their women to go to public baths?" They replied, "Yes." She then said that she heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«أيما امرأةٍ وضعت ثيابها في غير بيت زوجها،

فقد هتكت سترَ ما بينها وبين اللهِ عز وجل.»

**‹Any woman who takes off her clothes in other than her husband's house has indeed broken off the veil between herself and Allāh (ﷻ).›** [5]

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1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Ibn Khuzaymah defined this as 12 Hāshimī miles. Each Hāshimī mile is 4000 arm spans (60 cm), or 2.4 km, or 1.5 mi. Thus, a *barīd* is about 18 English miles.

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7302 & *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2421).

4 A Shāmī town north of Damascus.

5 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 2710).

Similarly, Umm Salamah (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأة نزعت ثيابها في غير بيتها، خرق اللهُ عز وجل عنها سِتره.»

**‹Any woman who takes off her clothes in other than her husband's house, Allāh (ﷻ) will then remove His cover off her.›** [1]

The above *ḥadīth*s also apply to a woman who undresses in public fitting rooms or in any place where there is any chance for men or women to see parts of her body that only her husband may see.

#### Avoiding Going Out of the House Without Reason

In general, the woman's normal abode is her home. It is the arena of her important duties and successful performance. It provides her with protection and security, and keeps her away from suspicious situations. A Muslim woman would not go in and out of her home without necessity. She would shy away from any place where she may chance mixing with men or being in their close proximity. Allāh advises the Mothers of the Believers, as well as all other Muslim women, by saying:

﴿وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ، وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ.﴾ الأحزاب ٣٣

**«And abide in your homes and do not display yourselves as was the display of the former times of *Jāhiliyyah*.»** [2]

## Financial Responsibility

We have seen in Chapter 1 that the wife shares the responsibility of her home's financial well-being.

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 2708).

2 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:33.

**SAFEGUARDING HIS POSSESSIONS**

A major right for the man on his wife is that she safeguards his property in his absence. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ﴾ النساء ٣٤

**«So, righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allāh), guarding in (their husband's) absence what Allāh commands them to guard (their husband's honor, property, secrets, etc.)»** [1]

Fulfillment of this responsibility is a good act that the Prophet (ﷺ) praised. Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once sought to marry a woman from the Quraysh: Umm Hāniʾ Bint Abī Ṭalib. She had five or six little boys from a deceased husband. She declined the Prophet's (ﷺ) offer, saying:

> "O Allāh's Messenger! You are the most beloved of Allāh's creation to me, and you are dearer to me than my hearing and eyesight. But I would hate for you to be annoyed by these boys morning and evening. And indeed, the husband's right is great. So I am afraid that if I turn my care toward my husband, I would neglect my children's right; and if I turn my care toward my children, I would neglect my husband's right."

So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«خير نساءٍ ركبن الإبل صالحُ نِساءِ قريش: أحناه على ولدٍ
في صِغَرِه، وأرعاهُ على زوجِها في ذاتِ يدِهِ.»

**‹The best women to ever ride camels are the Quraysh women; they are most caring for their children during their childhood, and most caring for**

1 *An-Nisāʾ* 4:34.

**their husband in regard to what he owns.›** [1]

### SPENDING WITH HIS PERMISSION

A woman may not dispense any of her husband's possessions without his permission or implicit consent (i.e., if she is sure that he would not mind) — not even charity. ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يجوز لامرأة عطيَّةٌ إلا أن يأذنَ زوجُها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to give a donation unless her husband allows that.›** [2]

### FOOD IS PART OF THE TRUST

Food is part of the woman's trust that she should not dispense without her husband's permission. Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī (ﷺ) and others reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said in a speech during his Farewell Pilgrimage:

«إن اللهَ قد أعطى كل ذي حق حقه، فلا وصيةَ لوارث.

ولا تنفقُ المرأةُ شيئاً من بيتها إلا بإذن زوجها.»

**‹Allāh has appointed for everyone his due right; thus no bequest may be made to a (standard) heir. And a woman may not spend anything from her house without her husband's permission.›**

Someone asked, "O Allāh's Messenger! Not even food?" He replied, «ذاك أفضل أموالنا.» **‹That is our best type of wealth.›** [3]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Saʿd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2523). The text of the Prophet's (ﷺ) words is also recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others, from Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) and Muʿāwiyah (ﷺ) (see *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2524).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7626 &*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 825).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-

### A Shared Reward

If a woman gives charity from her husband's money, knowing that he would not object to that, she would get half of the reward and he the other half.

Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أنفقت المرأةُ من كسب زوجها من غير أمره فله نصفُ الأجرِ.»

**‹When a woman gives charity from her husband's earnings, without his instruction, he gets half of the reward.›** [1]

And Abū Hurayrah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يحلُّ لامرأةٍ أن تصومَ وزوجُها شاهدٌ إلا بإذنه، أو تأذنَ في بيته إلا بإذنه، وما أنفقتْ من نفقة من غير أمرهِ فإنه يؤدّى إليها شطرُه.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to fast, while her husband is present, without his permission — except for *Ramaḍān*. Nor is it permissible for her to admit anyone to his house except with his permission. And whatever charity she gives without his instruction, she would receive half of its reward.›** [2]

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أنفقت المرأةُ من طعام بيتها غير مُفسدةٍ، كان لها أجرُها بما أنفقت، ولزوجها أجرُه بما اكتسب.»

**‹When a women gives away (as charity) from her home's food, without causing harm (to the family), she earns her reward because of her spending, and**

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Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ Abī Dāwūd* no. 3044).

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

**her husband earns his reward because he provided (the food).›** [1]

### USE OF HER OWN MONEY

Islām gives the woman full right to ownership, and her husband has no right to take any of her possessions (including her jewelry, dowry, clothing, etc.) without her permission. However, in order to maintain the harmony of the family and proper order within it — the husband being leader and the woman follower, some restrictions are placed on the woman's manner of spending of her own money.

If a woman would have the freedom of spending of her money at will and without reference to her husband, conflicts would soon arise when her spending interferes with some of her husband's decisions, thus undermining his authority. A simple example would be a case where the husband decides not to buy a car for his teenage son, but the wife interferes saying, "I will buy him one from my own money."

Therefore, Allāh (ﷻ), the most Wise, has decreed that a woman may not spend of her own money without her husband's permission (or implicit consent).

ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr and Kaʿb Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تجوز لامرأةٍ هبةٌ في مالها إلا بإذن زوجها - إذا ملك زوجُها عِصمتَها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to donate of her money except with her husband's consent — once her husband gains charge of her (at marriage).›** [2]

ʿAbdullāh Bin ʿAmr (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يجوز لامرأةٍ أمرٌ في مالها - إذا ملك زوجُها عِصمتَها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to (independently) spend of her money — once her husband gains**

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7238).

**charge of her (at marriage).›** [1]

Wāthilah (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ليس للمرأة أن تنتهك شيئاً من مالها إلا بإذن زوجها.»

**‹It is not permissible for a woman to spend of her money except with her husband's permission.›** [2]

#### ISLĀM VS. *UN-ISLĀMIC* LAWS

An important note is due here concerning Muslims living in non-Islāmic countries. Regardless of which one of the two spouses paid for a house or other major purchases, the laws of countries like the United States impose that the ownership is shared equally between the two spouses. This is unfair, and it is prohibited for anyone to take that which is not his own.

Thus, if a woman is given half of her husband's property when he dies or if he divorces her, she should not think that she has a right for it. Rather, she must seek her true Islāmic share and give up anything beyond that, remembering the Day when she will stand before Allāh (ﷻ) and He will judge justly between her and all those against whom she had transgressed.

## Avoiding Pretense and False Claims

Women often like to show-off what they have or pretend owning things that they do not. This is a form of lying that is prohibited in Islām. A righteous woman is like a clear mirror that reflects a good picture.

Asmā' (ﷺ) reported that a woman said, "O Allāh's Messenger, I have a co-wife. Is it wrong for me to pretend having things other than what my husband gave me (to tease her)?" He (ﷺ) replied:

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7625 *&aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 825).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 5424 *&aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 775).

«المتشبع بما لم يُعْطَ كلابسِ ثوبي زورٍ.»

**‹A person who pretends to have that which he does not is like one who wears two garments of deception.›** [1]

## Tending the Children

Tending the children is a shared responsibility between the two spouses. However, it is more emphasized for the wife because she normally spends more time with the children and is in position to exercise more supervision and guidance with them.

### Raising Her Children According to Islām

The children are the greatest fruit of marriage. They are a standing demonstration of its success or failure. Guarding the children from all harm and raising them upon the good Islāmic teaching is the only sure protection from Satan and the hellfire. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَـٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ، لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ، وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ۝﴾ التحريم ٦

**«O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones. Appointed over it are angels who are harsh and severe. They do not disobey Allāh in what he commands them but do what they are commanded.»** [2]

Tending her children is one of the woman's greatest responsibilities. Fulfilling it brings pleasure and happiness to her heart

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:6.

and her husband's. She should seriously handle this responsibility and never abandon it for the sake of earning some trivial money outside the home or watching some worthless shows on the television.

#### BREAST-FEEDING THE CHILDREN

A woman has the obligation of breast feeding her children up to two complete years. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ، لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ﴾ البقرة ٢٣٣

**«Mothers should nurse their children two complete years — for whoever desires to complete the nursing term.»** [1]

A woman may not forsake this important obligation unless she has an Islāmically acceptable excuse, such as a genuine medical problem. Women who deny their children their nursing rights are liable to punishment in the grave and in the Hereafter.

Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«بينما أنا نائم إذ أتاني رجُلان، فأخذا بضَبْعَيَّ، فأتيا بي جبلاً وعراً، فقالا: "اصعد." فقلت: "إني لا أُطيقُه." فقالا: "سنُسهّلُه لك."»

**‹While I was sleeping, two men (angels) came to me, held my upper arms, and took me to a rocky mountain. They said, "Climb." I said, "I cannot climb it." They said, "We will make it easy for you."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«فصعدتُ، حتى إذا كنتُ في سواء الجبل، إذا بأصواتٍ شديدة.

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:233.

قلت: "ما هذه الأصوات؟" قالوا: "هذا عِواءُ أهلِ ٱلنَّارِ."»

**‹So I ascended until I reached a high place in the mountain. I heard fierce cries and asked, "What are those cries?" They replied, "That is the howling of the people of the Fire."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا أنا بقومٍ معلقين بعراقيبهم، مشققةً أشداقُهم، تسيل أشداقُهم دماً، قلت: "من هٰؤلاء؟" قال: "هٰؤلاء الذين يُفطِرون قبل تحلّةِ صومهم."»

**‹We moved on until I saw people who were suspended from their Achilles' tendons, their cheeks cut and gushing blood. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the ones who break their fast before it is permissible."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا بقومٍ أشدَّ شيءٍ ٱنتفاخاً، وأنتَنَه ريحاً، وأسوأَه منظراً، فقلتُ: "من هٰؤلاء؟" فقال: "هٰؤلاءِ قتلى الكفّار."»

**‹We moved on until I saw people who were awfully swollen, and had the most foul stench and the most hideous appearance. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the disbelievers who have died (on the battlefield)."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلقَ بي، فإذا بقومٍ أشدَّ شيءٍ ٱنتفاخاً، وأنتَنَه ريحاً، كأنّ ريحَهُمُ المراحيضُ، قلت: "من هٰؤلاء؟" قال: "هٰؤلاء الزانونَ والزواني."»

**‹We moved on until I saw people who were awfully swollen, and had the most foul stench — their stench was like that of gutters. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the male and female adulterers."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلِقَ بي، فإذا أنا بنساءٍ تنهش ثديَهُنَّ الحيَّاتُ. قلت:
"ما بالُ هٰؤلاء؟" قال: "هٰؤلاء يمنعنَ أولادَهُنَّ ألبانَهُنَّ."»

**‹We moved on until I saw women with snakes biting at their breasts. I asked, "What is wrong with these?" They replied, "These are the women who deny their children their milk."›**

He (ﷺ) continued:

«ثُم ٱنطُلِقَ بي، فإذا أنا بالغُلمانِ يلعبونَ بين نهرين،
قلت:"من هٰؤلاء؟" قال:"هٰؤلاء ذراري المؤمنين."»

**‹We moved on until I saw boys playing between two rivers. I asked, "Who are these?" They replied, "These are the believers' offspring (who die before puberty).›** [1]

## Conclusion

Every Muslim woman should seek to attain the qualities of a good wife by obeying Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) — a path that surely leads to paradise. Also, by implementing these qualities, her marriage will be full of happiness. The best advice to every Muslim woman is to avoid the ways of the non-Muslims. Instead of building the family

1 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah (no. 1986), Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ut-Targhīb* no. 991).

upon religion, the non-Muslims build it upon desire. They ignore the basic differences between men and women and treat them as equals in every regard — which has resulted in broken families and shattered ties.

In Islām, men and women have different roles. More "public" duties are assigned to men, while women have more influence on the internal affairs of the family and the raising of children — the society's future citizens. Therefore, a Muslim woman should spend more time with her children than her husband does.

If families are not built on the foundation that Allāh ordained, misery, hatred, dissension, and corruption will surely rule.

Allāh will surely bless a marriage in which both the husband and wife obey Him and fulfill their obligations toward each other.

# CHAPTER 4

# THE MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS

## Introduction

The title "Mothers of the Believers" refers to the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) is the One who granted them this title:

﴿ٱلنَّبِيُّ أَوۡلَىٰ بِٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ مِنۡ أَنفُسِهِمۡ، وَأَزۡوَاجُهُۥٓ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمۡ﴾ الأحزاب ٦

**«The Prophet has more right on the believers than themselves, and his wives are their mothers.»** [1]

The Mothers of the Believers deserve special regard and respect. They are the women that Allāh chose for the intimate company of His Messenger (ﷺ). They conveyed to us a great deal of knowledge from their husband, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Like one's own mother, Allāh prohibited marrying any of the Mothers of the Believers after the Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمۡ أَن تُؤۡذُواْ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَن تَنكِحُوٓاْ أَزۡوَٰجَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا، إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمًا ۝﴾ الأحزاب ٥٣

**«It is not (allowed) for you to harm Allāh's Messenger or marry his wives after him, ever. Indeed, that would be in Allāh's sight an enormous (sin).»** [2]

In this chapter, we present a brief overview about each one of the Mothers of the Believers. The reason for this is their important role in

1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:6.

2 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:53.

relating to us most of what we know about the Prophet's (ﷺ) married life.

## Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid

Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) was the daughter Khuwaylid Bin Asad Bin ʿAbd il-ʿUzzā Bin Qaṣiyy Bin Kilāb. Therefore, she was from one of the noblest branches of the Quraysh tribe — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his fifth forefather: Qaṣiyy. Before Islām, she was known as aṭ-Ṭāhirah (the Pure one).

Khadījah was a wealthy woman, and she hired the Prophet (ﷺ) to manage her trade to Shām[1]. Noticing his honesty and good management, she offered herself to him in marriage, and he agreed.

Prior to the Prophet (ﷺ), she was married to Abū Hālah Bin Zurārah at-Tamīmī, then to ʿAtīq Bin ʿAbid Bin ʿAbdillāh Bin ʿUmar Bin Makhzūm. The Prophet (ﷺ) married her when he was twenty-five years old and she was forty.

She bore the Prophet (ﷺ) seven children: three boys (al-Qāsim, aṭ-Ṭayyib, and aṭ-Ṭāhir) and four girls (Ruqayyah, Zaynab, Umm Kulthūm, and Fāṭimah)[2]. The boys died in their early childhood, and the first three girls died in al-Madīnah during the Prophet's (ﷺ) lifetime. Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها) died a few months after her father.

Khadījah was the first person to believe in the Prophet (ﷺ) and support him. Jibrīl (عليه السلام) would often ask the Prophet (ﷺ) to give *salām* to Khadījah:

«يا خديجةُ، جبريل يُقرئُكِ السلام.»

**‹O Khadījah, Jibrīl gives you *salām*.›**

«"يا محمد، أقرأ على خديجةَ من ربها السلامَ."»

**‹O Muḥammad, give *salām* to Khadījah from her**

1 Damascus and the surrounding lands.

2 Whereas the girls are known and confirmed, the historians differ in regard to the boys — to the extent that some of them say that he had no boys at all from Khadījah, and others say that he only had al-Qāsim, and so on.

**Lord.›** [1]

Khadījah was one of the most perfect women who ever lived. Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī and Qurrah Bin Iyās (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كَمَل من الرجال كثير، ولم يكمُلْ من النساء إلا آسيةُ امرأةُ فرعونَ، ومريمُ بنتُ عِمرانَ، وخديجةُ بنتُ خُويلدٍ. وفضل عائشةَ على النساء كفضل الثريد على سائر الطعام.»

**‹Many men were complete (in faith, character, and *taqwā*), but only (three) women were complete: Āsiyah the wife of Pharaoh, Maryam Bint ʿImrān, and Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid. And the excellence of ʿĀ'ishah over other women is like the excellence of *tharīd* [2] over other types of food.›** [3]

Also, Anas and Jābir (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) named her among the best four women of all times:

«خيرُ نساء العالمين أربعٌ: مريمُ بنتُ عِمرانَ، وخديجةُ بنتُ خويلدٍ، وفاطمة بنتُ محمدٍ، وآسية امرأةُ فرعونَ.»

**‹The best of the people's women are four: Maryam Bint ʿImrān, Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, Fāṭimah Bint Muḥammad, and Āsiyah the wife of Pharaoh.›** [4]

The Prophet (ﷺ) did not marry before Khadījah, nor did he marry another woman while she was married to him. When she died, he was deeply grieved.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 A dish made of bread and meat broth. It is full of nutrients and easy to digest.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. The part about Khadījah is only recorded by Ibn Mardawayh (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 4578).

4 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmiṯī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 3328 & 3143).

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned Khadījah, he would not become tired of describing her, praising her, and seeking Allāh's forgiveness for her. One day, overtaken by jealousy, ʿĀ'ishah commented, "But Allāh has given you better than that old woman." Noticing signs of extreme anger on his face, she regretted her words and thought to herself, "O Allāh, if you take away Your Messenger's anger, I will never again say anything bad about her." When the Prophet (ﷺ) noticed her regret he said:

«كيف قلتِ؟ والله لقد آمنت بي إذ كذّبنيَ الناس، وآوتني
إذ رفضنيَ الناس، ورُزقتُ منها الولدَ وحُرمتُموه مني.»

**‹How could you have said that! By Allāh, she believed in me when people rejected me, and sheltered me when people expelled me. And I was granted offspring from her, whereas you all (my other wives) were denied offspring from me.›**

ʿĀ'ishah added, "He continued to say this to me, morning and evening, for a full month." [1]

In another report, ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) said that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما أبدلنيَ اللهُ خيراً منها. لقد آمنت بي حين كفر الناسُ، وأشركتني
في مالها حين حرمنيَ الناس، ورزقني اللهُ ولدَها، وحرمني ولدَ غيرِها.»

**‹No, Allāh did not substitute her for me with anyone who is better. She believed in me when people disbelieved, made me a partner in her wealth when people deprived me, and Allāh granted me offspring from her whereas he denied me offspring from other women.›** [2]

Khadījah (ﷺ) ranks high among the Muslim women of all time.

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1 Recorded by ad-Dūlābī in *ath-Thurriyat uṭ-Ṭāhirah*. Verified to be *ḥasan* by Shuʿayb al-Arnā'ūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalā'* 2:112).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, and substantiated by the previous report.

This was a result of her unwavering support of her best of husbands. She believed in him, offered him emotional and financial support, and reassured him in times of worry. Allāh granted her *Jannah* for this crucial role that she played in the life of the Prophet (ﷺ), and hence, in the life of every Muslim. The Prophet treasured her memory and kept relations with her friends long after her death. Allāh granted her the position of being the mother of all the decedents of the Prophet (ﷺ). All Muslim women should benefit from the example of Khadījah.

Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) died three years before *Hijrah*, and was buried in al-Ḥajūn (a mountain above Makkah). She was then about sixty-five years old.

## Sawdah Bint Zamʿah

Sawdah Bint Zamʿah Bin Qays (رضي الله عنها) was from the Quraysh — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his eight forefather: Luʾayy Bin Ghālib. She was previously married to as-Sakrān Bin ʿAmr al-ʿĀmirī, and they both were among the earliest people to embrace Islām. She migrated with him to al-Ḥabashah (Abyssinia), and he died upon their return to Makkah. Later on, the Prophet (ﷺ) married her in Makkah during *Ramaḍān* on the tenth year of his prophethood, and she was then in her fifties. Immediately after his *Hijrah*, he brought her to join him in al-Madīnah.

Sawdah was the first woman that the Prophet (ﷺ) married after Khadījah, and she was then in her mid-fifties. Thus, she became his only wife for more than four years — until he married ʿĀʾishah.

Because of her old age, Sawdah soon lost interest in men and felt that she was unable to fully please the Prophet (ﷺ). Thus, when the Prophet (ﷺ) married ʿĀʾishah, Sawdah gave up her turn with him to her in order to appease him — in case he had any thoughts of divorcing her.

She was a large, noble, and respectable woman. She died in al-Madīnah in 23 H — near the end of the rule of ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه).

## ʿĀ'ishah Bint Abī Bakr

### ʿĀ'ISHAH'S MARRIAGE

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) was the daughter of aṣ-Ṣiddīq (the most truthful): Abū Bakr ʿAbdullāh (ﷺ) Bin Abī Quḥafah ʿUthmān Bin ʿĀmir Bin ʿAmr Bin Kaʿb Bin Saʿd Bin Taym Bin Murrah. Therefore, she was from one of the noble branches of the Quraysh tribe — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his seventh forefather: Murrah Bin Kaʿb. She is the most knowledgeable woman of this *Ummah* without exception. Her mother was Umm Rūmān Bint ʿĀmir Bin ʿUwaymir, from the Kinānah tribe.

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) was born in Islām. She said, "I never saw my parents but practicing the *Dīn*." She was about eight years younger than Fāṭimah (ﷺ).

Her marriage contract was performed between the Prophet (ﷺ) and her father about three years before *Hijrah*. That was the same year that he (ﷺ) married Sawdah. She migrated with her parents to al-Madīnah, and the Prophet (ﷺ) consummated his marriage with her immediately after the battle of Badr, during the month of *Shawwāl*. She was then about nine years old [1]. She remained with him for about nine years. ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) married me (i.e. performed the

1 A girl of nine may still be a few years too young for marriage in most of today's cultures. However, the standards concerning the age of marriage were very different in earlier cultures. There are many documented cases of girls getting married in their early "teens", and thereafter living a most normal life and bearing many healthy children. That is by far better than the free practice of fornication among most of the so-called "civilized" young girls of our time, which has led to numerous cases of "teen" pregnancy, fatherless children, venereal diseases, drug addictions, and so on.

Furthermore, in tropical and hot climates, it is very common for the girls to mature at a very early age, which was the case with ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ), as is obvious from numerous actions and incidents that are reported about her during her "teens" years with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).

Finally, there is no doubt that Allāh (ﷻ) has chosen ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) and prepared her, from her early years, to be a worthy carrier of a great portion of the knowledge of prophethood.

> contract) shortly after the death of Khadījah, when I was six years old. I was brought to him (to live with him) when I was nine. Some women came to me when I was playing on a swing, my hair long and reaching my shoulders. They adorned and beautified me, and then took me to him." [1]

Asmāʾ Bint Yazīd Bin as-Sakan [2] reported that she adorned ʿĀʾishah (ﷺ) for the Prophet (ﷺ) and then invited him to come and see her. He came and sat next to her. He was given a large cup of milk. He drank some of it and then gave it to her. She shyly lowered her head, and Asmāʾ scolded her saying, "Do not reject Allāh's Messenger's offer." So she took the cup and drank some. The Prophet (ﷺ) then told her, «أعطي تربَكِ.» **‹Give your friend.›** Asmāʾ said, "O Allāh's Messenger! First take it back and drink from it, then give it to me with your hand." He took it, drank from it, and then gave it to her. She sat down, put it on her knees, and turned it around until she had her lips on the spot where the Prophet (ﷺ) drank [3]. Then he pointed to some other women who were with her and said, «ناولي صواحِبَكِ.» **‹Give your friends.›** They said, "We have no desire for it." He said:

«لا تجمعنَ جوعاً وكذِباً.»

**‹Do not combine hunger with lying.›** [4]

### ʿĀʾISHAH'S YOUTH

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saw the childish side in ʿĀʾishah's nature during her early years with him, and dealt with this understandably. She narrated:

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalāʾ* 2:228).

2 She was Muʿth Bin Jabal's cousin: one of the *Ansār* women who gave her covenant to the Prophet (ﷺ) during Bayʿat ur-Riḍwān. She lived until the time of Yazīd Bin Muʿāwiyah.

3 Seeking the blessing from Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) touch.

4 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ādāb uz-Zifāf* p. 92).

> "I used to play with dolls, and some of my young female friends used to come to play with me. When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) came home, they would hide away; and when he left, they would come back. And he used to send them to play with me." [1]

She also narrated that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) came back from the battle of Tabūk (or Khaybar), she had an niche covered with a curtain. The wind blew away the curtain exposing some dolls. He asked, «ما هذا يا عائشة؟» **‹What is this, O ʿĀ'ishah?›** She replied, "These are my dolls." He saw in their midst a horse with leather wings and asked, «ما هذا الذي أرى وسطهن؟» **‹What is this that I see in their midst?›** She said, "A horse." He asked, «وما هذا الذي عليه؟» **‹And what is that thing on it?›** She replied, "Two wings." He exclaimed, «فرس له جناحان؟» **‹A horse with two wings?›** She said, "Haven't you heard that Sulaymān had horses with wings?" So he laughed until she could see his inner teeth. [2]

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that once when she was very young she went with the Prophet (ﷺ) on a journey. At one point he told his companions, «تقدموا.» **‹Move ahead of us.›** Then he told her, «تعالي حتى أسابقكِ.» **‹Come, let me race you.›** They raced, and she won the race. A few years later, after she had grown heavier, she went with the Prophet (ﷺ) on another journey. He told his companions, «تقدموا.» **‹Move ahead of us.›** Then he told her, «تعالي حتى أسابقكِ.» **‹Come, let me race you.›** They raced, and he won the race. He said, «هذه بتلك.» **‹This victory is for that (previous) one.›** [3]

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) also reported that once some Abyssinians came as a delegation to the Prophet (ﷺ). During a *ʿīd* day, they played inside the *Masjid* with their spears. ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) wanted to stop them, but the Prophet (ﷺ) told him, «دعهم.» **‹Leave them alone.›** [4] The Prophet (ﷺ) stood at the door leading from ʿĀ'ishah's room into the *Masjid* and

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ Abī Dāwūd* no. 4123).

3 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmiʿ* no. 7007).

4 The part about ʿUmar is recorded by Muslim and an-Nasā'ī from Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

invited her to stand behind him and watch their games. She added:

> "They played inside the *Masjid*. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used his over-garment to cover me as I watched. I stood behind him, my chin on his shoulder, and my face against his. He waited patiently until I satisfied my curiosity and wanted to leave — So you should understand a young girl's need (for play)." [1]

#### THE ONLY VIRGIN

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) developed into a beautiful fair woman. That is why she was called *al-Ḥumayrā'*: the little white one [2].

The Prophet (ﷺ) did not marry a virgin other than ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها); and she used to boast about that to him. She once asked him, "O Allāh's Messenger, if you were to stop for rest in a valley in which you find trees that have been grazed on, and one tree on which no one has grazed, on which tree would you make your camel graze?" He replied, «الشجرةَ التي لم يؤكَلْ منها.» ‹**The tree on which no one has grazed.**› She said, "I am that tree." [3]

#### THE MOST BELOVED WIFE

The Prophet (ﷺ) loved ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) more than all of his other wives. ʿAmr Bin al-ʿĀṣ (رضي الله عنه) reported that he asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), "O Allāh's Messenger! Who is the most beloved to you among the people?" He replied, «عائشة.» ‹**ʿĀ'ishah.**› He asked, "And from among the men?" He replied, «أبوها.» ‹**Her father.**› [4]

The Prophet's (ﷺ) extreme love to ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was a public knowledge among the Muslims — and he (ﷺ) would not love but good things. Thus he chose the best two individuals of his *Ummah* as his beloved ones. When a person loves them, that would indicate his

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 In fact, *ḥamrā'* means "red", and *ḥumayrā'* means "little red" (both in the feminine gender). But the early Arabs often applied the "red" description to "white" things, reserving the "white" description for "purity" and related meanings (*Lisān ub-ʿArab*).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī from ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

love of Allāh and his Messenger (ﷺ); and when a person hates them, he would not be worthy of the love of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

#### Excellence over Other Women

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) excelled over other women by qualities that made the Prophet (ﷺ) state:

«فضل عائشة على النساء كفضل الثريد على سائر الطعام.»

**‹The excellence of ʿĀ'ishah over other women is like the excellence of *tharīd* over other types of food.›** [1]

This excellence must be based on a divine command, which made the Prophet (ﷺ) love her more than his other wives.

As will be seen in the next chapter, ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was the only one among the Mothers of the Believers that Jibrīl came with the revelation to the Prophet (ﷺ) while he was under the same blanket with her. On a number of occasions, the Prophet (ﷺ) would say to her:

«يا عائشة، هذا جبريل يُقرِئُكِ السلام.»

**‹O ʿĀ'ishah, Jibrīl is here, and he gives you *salām*.›** [2]

#### The Great Slander

Realizing the great position of ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) in the Prophet's (ﷺ) heart, the hypocrites tried to attack him in his honor through her. In 5 H, the Prophet (ﷺ) was returning to al-Madīnah from al-Muraysīʿ battle. ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was with him, and was then twelve years old. Near the end of the trip, the army stopped for rest.

Just before their night departure, ʿĀ'ishah found her necklace missing and went searching for it. She came back to find that the army had departed. She wrapped herself in her clothes and sat waiting for some people to come back for her. After a while, she fell asleep.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others from Anas. A similar statement has been cited earlier from the *ḥadīth* of Abū Mūsā.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

Ṣafwān Bin al-Muʿaṭṭal (ﷺ) was riding behind the army, trying to catch up with it. He reached ʿĀ'ishah's place in the morning, saw her dark figure, and realized who she was. He dismounted off his camel and waited for her to ride on it, then walked in front of her, leading the camel, until he caught up with the army where it stopped again for rest near noon.

This was a golden chance for the head of the hypocrites, ʿAbdullāh Bin Abī Salūl, and his supporters to slander ʿĀ'ishah, her husband (ﷺ), and the whole *Ummah*, by accusing her of committing *zinā* with Ṣafwān.

This grieved the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Muslims for a full month — until Allāh revealed ten *āyāt* declaring her innocence and condemning all those who joined in slandering her [1]. The Prophet (ﷺ) then told her:

«أما واللهِ، لقد برّأكِ اللهُ.»

**‹Indeed, by Allāh, Allāh has declared your innocence!› [2]**

#### ʿĀ'ISHAH'S JEALOUSY

Despite the great love that the Prophet (ﷺ) showed to ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), she was extremely jealous over him. Some incidents demonstrating this are cited in the next chapter. It is interesting to note, as we saw earlier, that her jealousy extended to Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) who died three years before her marriage. She said:

> "I was never jealous of any woman as much as I was jealous of Khadījah — because of Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) frequent mention of her." [3]

Anas and Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنهما) reported that once when the Prophet (ﷺ) was in ʿĀ'ishah's house with some of his companions, Umm Salamah sent to him a plate of food. When ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) saw

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1 *An-Nūr* 24:11-20.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others from ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

it, she took a rock the size of a hand and hit the plate with it, breaking it to two pieces. The Prophet (ﷺ) gathered the plate's parts and told his companions:

«كلوا، غارت أمكم. كلوا، غارت أمكم.»

**‹Eat — your mother was overcome with jealousy; eat — your mother was overcome with jealousy!.›**

So they ate. The Prophet (ﷺ) then kept the broken plate in ʿĀ'ishah's house, sent a good plate of hers to Umm Salamah, and said:

«إناءٌ كإناءٍ، وطعامٌ كطعام.»

**‹A comparable plate for a (damaged) plate, and a comparable food for a (damaged) food.›** [1]

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that one night she could not find the Prophet (ﷺ) next to her. Then she found him nearby, praying. She passed her fingers through his hair to see if he had a shower (having a suspicion that he might have secretly visited one of her cowives). He (later) said:

«قد جاءكِ شيطانُكِ.»

**‹Your devil has surely come to you!›**

She asked, "O Allāh's Messenger! Do you not have a devil?" He replied:

«بلى، ولكن اللهَ أعانني عليه فأسلم.»

**‹Yes indeed, but Allāh helped me against him so that he embraced Islām.›** [2]

Similarly, ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that she missed the Prophet (ﷺ) one night and thought that he went to another one of his wives. She

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1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 1523).

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīhu Sunan in-Nasā'ī* no. 3696).

started looking for him and found him praying, in *rukūʿ* or *sujūd*, whispering:

«سبحانكَ وبحمدِك، لا إلٰهَ إلا أنت.»

**‹*Subḥānaka wa-biḥamdik, lā ilāha illā ant* — Exalted be You, and praise to You; there is no god (worthy of being worshiped) except You.›**

She then said, "May my father and mother be your ransom: Indeed, you are involved in one affair (worship), and I in a different affair (jealousy)." [1]

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) reported that one night when it was her turn with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), he retired to bed, took off his upper garment, took off his shoes and put them near his feet. He then spread the edge of his *izār* (lower garment), and lied down. He waited until he thought that she was asleep, then quietly got up and took his upper garment, put on his shoes, opened the door and stepped out, quietly closing it behind him. ʿĀ'ishah quickly put on her dress, wore her head-cover, wrapped around her *izār*, and ran after him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) walked to al-Baqīʿ [2], stood for a long time, and raised his hands three times. Then he turned around, and ʿĀ'ishah turned; he trotted, and she trotted; he ran, and she ran — until they both reached the houses. She hurried ahead of him and entered her house. As soon as she lied down, he (ﷺ) entered and exclaimed, «ما لكِ يا عائشُ حشْيا رابيَة؟» **‹What is wrong with you, O ʿĀ'ish [3], panting and your abdomen rising and falling?›** She replied, "Nothing O Allāh's Messenger." He said, «لتُخبرنِّي أو ليُخْبرنِّي اللطيفُ الخبير.» **‹You either tell me, or the Most-Subtle and Well-Aware will tell me.›** So she said, "May my father and mother be a ransom for you, O Allāh's Messenger," and she told him what had happened. He asked, «فأنتِ السوادُ الذي رأيتُه أمامي؟» **‹So you were the black thing that I saw before me?›** She replied, "Yes!" He pushed her playfully in the chest and said, «أظننتِ أن يحيفَ اللهُ عليكِ ورسولُه؟» **‹Did you think that Allāh and**

1 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasāʾī, and others.

2 A graveyard to the north of the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Masjid* in which many of the *ṣaḥābah* and Mothers of the Believers were buried.

3 A nickname with which Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sometimes called ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ).

**His Messenger would be unfair to you (by giving your rightful time to another wife)?›** She said, "Whatever people hide, Allāh knows." He said:

«فإن جبريلَ أتاني حينَ رأيتِ، فناداني فأخفاه منكِ، فأجبتُه فأخفيتُه منكِ، ولم يكن ليدخلَ عليكِ وقد وضعتِ ثيابَكِ. وظننتُ أنْ قد رقدتِ، فكرهتُ أن أوقظَكِ، وخشيتُ أن تستوحِشي. فقال: "إن ربَّك يأمرُكَ أن تأتيَ أهل البقيعِ فتستغفرَ لهم."»

**‹Yes! Verily, Jibrīl came to me when you saw that. He called me without letting you hear, and I responded to him without letting you know. He was not to enter into your house after you have laid down your clothes. I thought that you had slept, and hated to wake you up, fearing that you would feel lonely (if you knew that I was leaving). Jibrīl told me, "Your Lord commands you to go to the (dead) people of al-Baqīʿ and ask forgiveness for them."›**

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) asked, "What should I say for them, O Allāh's Messenger?" He (ﷺ) instructed:

«السلامُ على أهلِ الديارِ من المؤمنين والمسلمين، ويرحمُ اللهُ المستقدمين منا والمُستأخِرين، وإنا إن شاء اللهُ بكم للاحقون.»

***‹As-Salāmu ʿalā ahl id-diyāri min al-muʾminīna wal-muslimīn, wa-yarḥam Ullāh ul-mustaqdimīna minnā wal-mustaʾkhirīn, wa-innā in shāʾa 'Llāhu bikum lalāḥiqūn.***

**Peace be on the dwellers of these places — of believers and Muslims. May Allāh have mercy upon the earlier and later among us. Certainly, we will follow you when Allāh wills.›** [1]

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

### AL-JAMAL FIGHT

In 18 *Thulḥijjah* of 35 H, ʿUthmān (ﷺ) was assassinated through a plot by ʿAbdullāḥ Bin Saba' and other enemies of Islām. A few days after that, ʿAlī (ﷺ) was appointed as the new *Khalīfah*. ʿAlī, ʿĀ'ishah, and the other chief *ṣaḥābah* were intent on resolving the problems following ʿUthmān's (ﷺ) assassination — most importantly, finding and punishing the assassins, and reestablishing the authority of the *khilāfah*.

However, Ibn Saba' and his followers continued their plotting, and succeeded in dragging the *ṣaḥābah* into a fight against each other, with ʿĀ'ishah, Ṭalḥah, and az-Zubayr on one side against ʿAlī, ʿAmmar, and other companions. That was called the battle of al-Jamal, because it centered around the camel carrying ʿĀ'ishah's howdah.

The battle took place in the middle of *Jumādā al-Ākhirah* 36 H. ʿAlī (ﷺ) won the battle, but after more than ten thousand Muslims, including Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr, were killed.

After winning the battle, ʿAlī treated ʿĀ'ishah respectfully, and sent her safely to her home. ʿAmmār Bin Yāsir (ﷺ) said in a speech prior to the fight, "Indeed, we know that she is our Prophet's (ﷺ) wife in the first and last lives." [1]

ʿĀ'ishah's and her supporters' involvement in that fight was based on *ijtihād*, and was for the pleasure of Allāh. Yet, they realized later that their position was wrong, and ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) deeply regretted that till her last days.

### DEATH

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) conveyed a great amount of knowledge from the Prophet (ﷺ) and a number of his companions, including Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (ﷺ). Her recorded narrations are more than two thousand, three hundred of which are recorded in al-Bukhārī, Muslim, or both.

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) was generous and charitable, and she lived a very moderate living.

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) died in 58 H in al-Madīnah and was buried in al-Baqīʿ.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and at-Tirmithī.

## Zaynab Bint Khuzaymah

Zaynab Bint Khuzaymah Bin al-Ḥārith Bin ʿAbdillāh al-Hilāliyyah (﵂) was also called Umm ul-Masākīn (Mother of the Needy) because of her great benevolence. She and Maymūnah were maternal sisters.

She was previously married to aṭ-Ṭufayl Bin al-Ḥārith. After his death, his brother ʿUbaydah Bin al-Ḥārith (﵁) married her. The latter was killed in the battle of Uḥud, so Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) married her soon thereafter.

She remained with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) only for about two months and then died at the age of sixty. She was the first of the Mothers of the Believers to be buried in al-Baqīʿ.

## Umm Salamah

### Lineage

Umm Salamah's (﵂) name was Hind Bint Abī Umayyah. She was from the Makhzūm branch of the Quraysh tribe — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his seventh forefather: Murrah Bin Kaʿb. She was a cousin of Khālid Bin al-Walīd and Abū Jahl Bin Hishām.

She was a most beautiful woman, and was among the first Muslim women who migrated to al-Madīnah. Prior to the Prophet (ﷺ), she was married to his foster-brother, Abū Salamah Bin ʿAbd il-Asad al-Makhzūmī (﵁).

### Marriage to the Prophet

Umm Salamah (﵂) reported that she once heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«ما من مسلم تصيبه مصيبةٌ فيقول ما أمره اللهُ:
"﴿إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ اللَّهمَّ آجِرْني في مُصيبتي

وأَخْلِفْ لي خيراً منها" إلاّ أَخْلَفَ اللهُ له خَيراً منها.»

**‹Whenever an affliction strikes a Muslim and he says, as Allāh commanded him, "*Innā li-'Llāhi, wa-innā ilayhi rājiʿūn. Allāhumma ājirnī fī muṣībatī, wa-akhlif lī khayran minhā* — «To Allāh we belong, and to Him will we return,» O Allāh, reward me for my affliction and replace it for me with that which is better," Allāh will then surely replace it for him with that which is better.›**

Thus, when Abū Salamah died, she thought, "Who among the Muslims can be better than Abū Salamah? He is from the first people who migrated to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)!" Yet, she said the above supplication, and Allāh substituted him for her with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sent Ḥāṭib Bin Abī Balta'ah to represent him in seeking her hand in marriage. She told him, "I have a daughter to look after, and am a jealous woman (and the Prophet (ﷺ) has several wives)." So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أما ٱبنتُها، فندعو اللهَ أن يغنيَها عنها. وأَدعو الله أن يُذْهِبَ بالغَيرةِ.»

**‹As for her daughter, we ask Allāh to suffice her from her. And I ask Allāh to remove her jealousy.›"** [1]

In another report, Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) said that when Abū Salamah (رضي الله عنه) died, she went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him, "O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)! Abū Salamah has passed away." He instructed her to say:

«اللّهمَّ ٱغْفرْ لي وله، وأَعْقِبْني منه عُقبى حسنةً.»

**‹O Allāh, forgive me and him, and succeed him for me with that which is good.›**

She concluded, "Allāh then succeeded him for me with one who is better for me than him: Muḥammad (ﷺ)!" [2]

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1 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and Aḥmad.

2 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and others.

The Prophet (ﷺ) married her in 4 H when she was thirty years old. All three of her children, ʿUmar, Salamah, and Zaynab, became *ṣaḥābah*. And she became one of the most knowledgeable women of Islām.

#### DEATH

Umm Salamah was the last of the Mothers of the Believers to die. She lived until she was informed about the killing of al-Ḥusayn Bin ʿAlī (رضي الله عنه). Greatly saddened by this, she died shortly thereafter in 62 H. She was then approximately ninety years old. She was buried in al-Baqīʿ.

## Ḥafṣah Bint ʿUmar

Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها) was the daughter of ʿUmar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb Bin Nufayl (رضي الله عنه) from the Quraysh tribe — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his eight forefather: Kaʿb Bin Luʾayy. Her mother was Zaynab Bint Maẓʿūn, ʿUthmān Bin Maẓʿūn's (رضي الله عنه) sister.

Ḥafṣah was previously married to Khunays Bin Ḥuthāfah as-Sahmī. He was one of the early Muslims who migrated first to al-Ḥabashah (Abyssinia). He fought in Badr and Uḥud, and died from his wounds right after Uḥud on the third year of *al-Hijrah*.

After Khunays's death, ʿUmar offered Ḥafṣah to Abū Bakr and ʿUthmān, but they both declined marrying her. This upset ʿUmar, but the Prophet (ﷺ) consoled him saying:

«يتزوج حفصةَ من هو خير من عثمانَ،

ويتزوج عثمانُ من هي خير من حفصة.»

**‹One who is better than ʿUthmān will marry Ḥafṣah, and ʿUthmān will marry one who is better than Ḥafṣah.›** [1]

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Ibn Saʿd from Ibn ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه).

When the Prophet (ﷺ) married Ḥafṣah, she was approximately twenty years old. The Prophet (ﷺ) divorced her once, probably for exposing a secret that he commanded her to keep (as will be discussed next chapter), but Allāh ordered him to take her back. He said:

«قال لي جبريلُ (عليه السلام): "راجِع حفصةَ، فإنها صوّامةٌ قوّامةٌ، وإنها زوجتُك في الجنة."»

**‹Jibrīl told me, "Take back Ḥafṣah, because she fasts frequently and performs long prayers at night, and she will be your wife in *Jannah*."›** [1]

She died in 45 H in al-Madīnah.

## Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh

Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh Bin Riʾāb (رضي الله عنها) was the daughter of Umaymah Bint ʿAbd ul-Muṭṭalib Bin Hāshim, the Prophet's (ﷺ) paternal aunt. She was born approximately 20 years before the beginning of the Prophet's (ﷺ) mission.

She embraced Islām in Makkah early during the mission of the Prophet (ﷺ), and was married to Zayd Bin Ḥārithah, the *mawlā* (freed slave) of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Their marriage was not successful and it ended with divorce. Immediately after, Allāh's command came for the Prophet (ﷺ) to marry her. [2]

She used to boast about this to her co-wives, saying:

> "Whereas your parents gave you in marriage, Allāh (ﷻ) gave me in marriage from above His Throne." [3]

She was righteous, generous, and charitable. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

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1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, and others, from ʿUmar and Ibn ʿUmar (رضي الله عنهما). Verified to be authentic by Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalāʾ* 2:228).

2 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:37.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

«أسرعُكُنّ لحوقاً بي أطولُكُنّ يداً.»

**‹The one among you (my wives) who will join me first is the one with the longest arms (i.e., most charitable).›** [1]

ʿĀ'ishah said:

> "All of them (the Mothers of the Believers) used to compete in being charitable, but Zaynab excelled because she used to work (to earn money) and then give it in charity." [2]

Thus, it is more correct to say that this *ḥadīth* applied to her, contrary to what some of the narrators thought (that it applied to Sawdah).

ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ) also described her saying:

> "She was the one who rivaled me in status with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). I have not seen a more righteous woman than Zaynab, nor one with more *taqwā* of Allāh, more truthful speech, more kindness to her relatives, more benevolence, and more dedication in the work that she did for charity … except for a hot temper that she had, but quickly restrained. May Allāh be pleased with her." [3]

The above *ḥadīth* indicates that Zaynab died before Sawdah. She died in 20 H, and ʿUmar (ﷺ) prayed over her. She was buried in al-Baqīʿ.

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1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim from ʿĀ'ishah.

2 Recorded by Muslim.

3 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

## Juwayriyah Bint al-Ḥārith

Juwayriyah (ﷺ) was the daughter of al-Ḥārith Bin Abī Ḍirār. Her name was Barrah, but the Prophet changed it to Juwayriyah [1]. She was from the tribe of al-Muṣṭaliq, and was taken as a war-captive during the battle of al-Muraysīʿ in 5 H. When the Prophet (ﷺ) married her, she was twenty years old, and she died approximately 50 years later.

She was a most beautiful woman, as attested by her co-wife ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ):

> "When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) divided the war captives of the tribe of al-Muṣṭaliq, Juwayriyah Bint al-Ḥārith was given to Thābit Bin Qays Bin ash-Shammās (or a cousin of his). She made a contract with him to free herself for money. She was a most beautiful woman, no one seeing her but being baffled by her beauty. She came to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) seeking his help in paying herself off.
>
> By Allāh, when I saw her at my door, I hated her (for her beauty), and knew that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) will find in her what I have found (of beauty). She came in and said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! I am Juwayriyah Bint al-Ḥārith Bin Abī Ḍirār, the chief of his people, and I have been touched by affliction as you are well aware. I have been allotted to Thābit Bin Qays Bin ash-Shammās (or a cousin of his). I have made a contract with him to pay myself off, and came seeking your help in that.' He said, «فهل لكِ خير من ذلك؟» ‹**Would you like to consider a better deal?**› She asked, 'What is it, O Allāh's Messenger?' He said, «أقضي عنكِ كتابتَك وأتزوجك.» ‹**I pay that off for you and marry you.**› She said, 'Certainly, O Allāh's Messenger.' He said, «قد فعلت.» ‹**It is done.**›
>
> When the news came out that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) had married Juwayriyah, the Muslims freed their captives from al-Muṣṭaliq, who had become

1 This is recorded by Muslim and others from Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ).

> the Prophet's (ﷺ) brethren in law. Thus, one hundred households from al-Muṣṭaliq were freed, and I do not know any woman who brought more blessings to her people than Juwayriyah did." [1]

## Umm Ḥabībah

Umm Ḥabībah's (رضي الله عنها) name was Ramlah. She was the sister of Muʿāwiyah (رضي الله عنه), and both of them were children of Abū Sufyān, Ṣakhr Bin Ḥarb Bin Umayyah Bin ʿAbd Shams Bin ʿAbd Mināf — meeting with the Prophet (ﷺ) in ancestry at his fourth forefather: ʿAbd Mināf Bin Qaṣiyy. She was the Prophet's (ﷺ) paternal cousin, and the closest of all his wives in relationship to him.

She migrated to al-Ḥabashah (Abyssinia) with her husband ʿUbaydullāh Bin Jaḥsh. In al-Ḥabashah, he apostated and died as a Christian. The Prophet (ﷺ) then sent ʿAmr Bin Umayyah to an-Najāshī requesting to marry her. An-Najāshī married her to the Prophet (ﷺ), gave her four thousand *dirhams* and presents, and sent her to al-Madīnah guarded by Sharḥabīl Bin Ḥasanah. She arrived in al-Madīnah on the sixth year of *al-Hijrah*, and was then over thirty years old.

She died during the rule of her brother Muʿāwiyah, in 42 or 44 H.

## Ṣafiyyah Bint Ḥuyayy

Ṣafiyyah Bint Ḥuyayy Bin Akhṭab Bin Saʿyah (رضي الله عنها) descended from the prophet Hārūn (عليه السلام), who in turn descended from Lāwī (Levi) Bin Yaʿqūb (Jacob) Bin Isḥāq (عليه السلام).

She was previously married to Salām Bin Abī al-Ḥaqīq, and then to his brother Kinānah Bin Abī al-Ḥaqīq. Kinānah was killed during the battle of Khaybar, and Ṣafiyyah was taken as a war-captive, but the Prophet (ﷺ) freed her and married her. She was then approximately seventeen years old.

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Hishām. Verified to be authentic by Shuʿayb al-Arnā'ūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalā'* 2:262).

She was noble, honorable, wise, beautiful, and righteous. Anas reported that once Ṣafiyyah heard that Ḥafṣah said about her that, "She is nothing but the daughter of a Jew." She wept because of this, and when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saw her weeping and asked her why, she told him what Ḥafṣah had said. He (ﷺ) said:

«إنك لابنة نبي، وإن عمك لنبي، وإنك لتحت نبي، ففيم تفخر عليكِ؟»

**‹Indeed, you are a prophet's (Hārūn) daughter, and indeed, your uncle (Mūsā) is a prophet; and indeed, you are married to a prophet. So, how can she boast over you?›**

He then told Ḥafṣah, «اتقي الله يا حفصة.» **‹Have *taqwā* of Allāh, O Ḥafṣah.›** [1]

She died approximately in 50 H in al-Madīnah and was buried in al-Baqīʿ.

## Maymūnah Bint al-Ḥārith

Maymūnah Bint ul-Ḥārith Bin Ḥazn al-Hilāliyyah (رضي الله عنها) was the sister of Umm al-Faḍl, the wife of al-ʿAbbās. Thus, she was the maternal aunt of both Khālid Bin al-Walīd and Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنهما).

Before Islām, she was married to Masʿūd Bin ʿAmr ath-Thaqafī who later divorced her. She then married Abū Ruḥm Bin ʿAbd il-ʿUzzā. After Abū Ruḥm died, the Prophet (ﷺ) married her in *Thul-qaʿdah* of 7 H, right after he (ﷺ) had completed his *ʿUmrah*.

She was a very noble woman. ʿĀ'ishah described her saying:

> "By Allāh, Maymūnah is now gone. Indeed, she surely was the most righteous among us, and the kindest toward her relatives." [2]

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1 Recorded by Aḥmad and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by Shuʿayb al-Arnā'ūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalā'* 2:233).

2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and Ibn Saʿd. Verified to be *ḥasan* by Shuʿayb al-Arnā'ūṭ (*Siyaru Aʿlām in-Nubalā'* 2:244).

She died approximately in 50 H, and was buried in Sarif, which is the same Makkan suburb where the Prophet (ﷺ) married her.

## Māriyah the Coptic

Māriyah Bint Shamʿūn (رضي الله عنها) was one of the Prophet's (ﷺ) female slaves. Al-Muqawqas, who was the king of Alexandria and Egypt, sent her to him as a gift in 7 H.

She was a Coptic Egyptian of fair complexion. She embraced Islām when she reached al-Madīnah. She gave birth to Ibrāhīm, his only son from other than Khadījah, in 8 H. This earned her freedom, and the Prophet (ﷺ) veiled her like his other wives. Ibrāhīm died when he was two years old.

Māriyah died in al-Madīnah in 16 H, during the *khilāfah* of ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه), and was buried in al-Baqīʿ.

## Important Dates

The following table summarizes some important dates concerning the Mothers of the Believers. "Marr." refers to the year that they got married to the Prophet (ﷺ). It should be noted that many of the following dates are approximate, and the historians considerably differ over some of them. For example, some historians say that Sawdah died in 5 H; others say that she died near the end of ʿUmar's rule. We list below the dates that appeared most correct to us.

**Important Dates Concerning the Mothers of the Believers**

| # | Name | Birth | Marr. | Death | Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid | 68 BH | 28 BH | 3 BH | 65 |
| 2 | Sawdah Bint Zamʿah | 58 BH | 3 BH | 23 H | 80 |
| 3 | ʿĀ'ishah Bint Abī Bakr | 9 BH | 2 H | 58 H | 66 |

| # | Name | Birth | Marr. | Death | Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Zaynab Bint Khuzaymah | 57 BH | 4 H | 4 H | 60 |
| 5 | Umm Salamah (Hind Bint Abī Umayyah) | 28 BH | 4 H | 62 H | 90 |
| 6 | Ḥafṣah Bint ʿUmar | 18 BH | 4 H | 45 H | 62 |
| 7 | Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh | 33 BH | 5 H | 20 H | 53 |
| 8 | Juwayriyah Bint al-Ḥārith | 14 BH | 6 H | 56 H | 70 |
| 9 | Umm Ḥabībah (Ramlah Bint Abī Sufyān) | 25 BH | 6 H | 44 H | 68 |
| 10 | Ṣafiyyah Bint Ḥuyayy | 10 BH | 7 H | 50 H | 60 |
| 11 | Maymūnah Bint al-Ḥārith | 30 BH | 7 H | 50 H | 80 |
| 12 | Māriyah Bint Shamʿūn, the Coptic | 10 BH | 7 H | 16 H | 26 |

## Other wives

There were other women that the Prophet (ﷺ) married but did not approach for various reasons. They were:

Al-ʿĀliyah from the tribe of Bakr Bin Kilāb
Asmāʾ Bint Kaʿb al-Jawniyyah
Umm Sharīk from *al-Anṣār*
Sanāʾ Bint Asmāʾ Bin aṣ-Ṣalt as-Sulamiyyah
Fāṭimah al-Kilābiyyah
Asmāʾ Bint an-Nuʿmān al-Kindiyyah

As for the second one, ʿĀʾishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that when al-Jawniyyah was admitted to the Prophet's (ﷺ) presence and he approached her she said, "*Aʿūṯhu billāhi mink* — I ask Allāh to protect me from you." He immediately divorced her saying:

«لقد عذتِ بعظيم! الحقي بأهلك.»

**‹Indeed, you have sought protection from the Great One: Go to your family.›** [1]

Some reports indicate that she regretted this for the rest of her life.

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Ibn Mājah, and others.

# CHAPTER 5

# WITH THE PROPHET & HIS WIVES

## Introduction

The life of the Prophet (ﷺ) with his wives is amazing indeed. It reflects an astounding combination of human nature with prophethood — the human nature taken to sublime levels of compassion and forgiveness, and the prophethood maintaining its supremacy amidst the most striking incidents that could arise between married people.

It also brings to life the personalities of his wives — the Mothers of the Believers. They were real human females who had many of the common characters (not necessarily vices) of females, such as jealousy, conspiracy, and uncontrollable anger.

We have presented in the previous chapter a few incidents that took place between the Prophet (ﷺ) and his wives. In what follows, we present some additional ones — especially those that are particularly longer or include more details. A vast number of lessons can be derived from each the forthcoming narrations. However, we only provide a limited number of comments that we deem necessary for clarifying some obscure incidents or deriving some important morals.

## The Prophet's Wives Form Two Teams

The Mothers of the Believers (رضي الله عنهن) formed themselves into two opposing "teams", the first led by ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), and the other by Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها). The goal of each "team" was attracting (as much as possible) the Prophet's (ﷺ) recognition and love.

### TEXT OF THE *ḤADĪTH*

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) wives were two teams; one team included ʿĀ'ishah, Ḥafṣah, Ṣafiyyah, and Sawdah, and

the other team included Umm Salamah and the rest of Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) wives [1]. Knowing Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) superior love of ʿĀ'ishah, the Muslims who wanted to give a present to him would delay giving it until he was in ʿĀ'ishah's house.

So Umm Salamah's "team" asked her to talk to him and ask him to tell the people to give their presents regardless of which house of his wive's he would be at. When it was her turn with the Prophet (ﷺ), Umm Salamah told him that, but he did not give any response. When she told her "team" about this, they asked her to talk to him again. So she spoke to him when it was her next turn, and he still did not give any response. Her "team" told her, "Keep talking to him until he gives you a response." On her next turn, she again brought that up with him. He (ﷺ) said:

«لا تؤذيني في عائشة، فإن الوحي لم يأتني وأنا في ثوب امرأة، إلا عائشة.»

**‹Do not hurt me in regard to ʿĀ'ishah. Indeed, the revelation did not come to me while I was under any woman's covers except ʿĀ'ishah's.›**

Umm Salamah said, "I repent to Allāh from doing anything that would hurt you, O Allāh's Messenger."

Umm Salamah's "team" then asked Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها), Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) daughter, to intervene on their behalf. She went to him and said, "Your wives are asking you for justice in regard to the daughter of Abū Bakr." He said, «يا بنية، ألا تحبين ما أحب؟» **‹O my daughter! Do you not love what I love?›** She replied, "Yes!" He pointed to ʿĀ'ishah and said, «فأحبي هذه.» **‹So love this one.›** She went back to them and informed them of what happened. They said, "We do not see that you were of any help to us." They wanted her to go again to him, but she refused saying, "By Allāh, I will never speak to him again in her regard."

Finally, they sent Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh. Raging with anger, Zaynab stormed into ʿĀ'ishah's house, where the Prophet (ﷺ) was. She raised

1 They were: Umm Salamah, Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh, Umm Ḥabībah, Juwayriyah, and Maymūnah. As for Zaynab Bint Khuzaymah (رضي الله عنها), she died before Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) married Umm Salamah (see *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 5:258).

her voice saying, "O Allāh's Messenger! Indeed, your wives demand justice in regard to Ibn Abī Quḥāfah's daughter. Are you only satisfied when she opens her little arms for you (to convince you of what she wants)?" She then turned to ʿĀ'ishah and started addressing her with harsh words. The Prophet (ﷺ) tried stopping her, but she went on; and ʿĀ'ishah remained silent, waiting for the Prophet's (ﷺ) permission to respond. Finally, he said, «دونَكِ، فانتصري.» **‹Go ahead — defend yourself!›**

ʿĀ'ishah then responded with full force — leaving Zaynab totally speechless, "Until I saw the saliva dry in her mouth — unable to respond," ʿĀ'ishah said.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was pleased with that. He looked at ʿĀ'ishah approvingly and said, «إنها بنت أبي بكر.» **‹Indeed, she is Abū Bakr's daughter!›** [1]

**NOTES**

1. The Prophet's (ﷺ) above statement, about the revelation coming to him under ʿĀ'ishah's covers, clearly indicates that his favoring of ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was not haphazard or senseless. It was based on her excellent qualities that singled her out from among all his wives, and that made Jibrīl come under her bed-covers to talk to the Prophet (ﷺ) and bring him the revelation.

2. Our knowledge of Jibrīl's (عليه السلام) modesty allows us to conclude that when he came to the Prophet (ﷺ) under ʿĀ'ishah's covers, she must have been decently clothed for his presence.

3. The Prophet (ﷺ) position in this narration may appear to be unfairly biased toward ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها). However, as we stated earlier, the Prophet's (ﷺ) love for ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) was a divine grant based on her merits and excellence. By no means was it meant to hurt or deprive the other Mothers of the Believers. The Prophet (ﷺ) treated them all equally in material matters. However, in terms of his love and emotion, ʿĀ'ishah had the greatest share. Her co-wives, like all other Muslims, were supposed to understand

1 This is a combined narration recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

that and appreciate it — not for her sake, but for the sake of their love of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

## The Prophet's Wives Cooperate Against Him

### TEXT OF THE *ḤADĪTH*

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to visit all of his wives after *ʿaṣr* prayer, spending a short time closely chatting with each one of them. He (ﷺ) liked honey and sweets. Once a woman from among the relatives of Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh (رضي الله عنها) gave Zaynab a jar of honey as a present. So she would offer the honey to the Prophet (ﷺ) when he visited her, which would briefly extend the duration of his visit.

When they noticed that, the other wives became jealous. Led by ʿĀ'ishah and Ḥafṣah, they decided to put an end to it. "By Allāh, we will scheme something," ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said. They agreed that when the Prophet (ﷺ) approached either of them, she would pretend that she was repulsed by a foul odor coming from him, which resembled that of a wild desert plant called *maghāfīr*.

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) hated foul odors. When he went to ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), she inquired about the foul odor emanating from him. "You must have eaten some *maghāfīr*, I can surely smell the odor of *maghāfīr* coming from you," she added. He denied that and said that he only had some honey at Zaynab's. She said, "The bees must have fed on *maghāfīr* flowers." When he (ﷺ) went to Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها), she said the same. The Prophet (ﷺ) believed the story and made an oath never to take of that honey. The next time he went to Zaynab she said, "O Allāh's Messenger, I will give you some honey." He replied, «لا حاجة لي به.» ‹**I have no desire for it.**› So Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَآ أَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ لَكَ، تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَٰجِكَ، وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝ قَدْ فَرَضَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ، وَٱللَّهُ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ، وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ۝﴾ التحريم ١-٢

**«O Prophet! Why do you prohibit for yourself that which Allāh has made lawful for you, seeking the approval of your wives? Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful. Allāh has already ordained for you the (procedure for) dissolution of your oaths [1]. Allāh is your Protector, and He is the Knowing and Wise.»** [2]

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) made an oath never to eat that honey, and he confided this to ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها):

«شربتُ عسلاً، ولن أعودَ له. وقد حلفتُ، لا تخبري بذلك أحداً.»

**‹I have taken some of that honey, but will never take it anymore. I have also made an oath in that regard, so inform no one about it.›**

However, ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) did not hold the secret, but informed Ḥafṣah about it. Allāh (ﷻ) then revealed that to him, and he reproached ʿĀ'ishah for exposing his secret:

﴿وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَٰجِهِۦ حَدِيثًا، فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِۦ وَأَظْهَرَهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضَهُۥ وَأَعْرَضَ عَن بَعْضٍ، فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِۦ قَالَتْ: "مَنْ أَنبَأَكَ هَٰذَا؟" قَالَ: "نَبَّأَنِيَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ." ۝﴾ التحريم ٣

**«And (remember) when the Prophet confided to one of his wives a statement; and when she informed (another) of it and Allāh showed that to him, he made known part of it and ignored a part. And when he informed her about it she said, "Who told you this?" He said, "The One Who is Knowing and Acquainted has informed me.»** [3, 4]

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1 See *al-Mā'idah* 5:89.

2 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:1-2.

3 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:3.

4 The above is a combined narration from ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها), recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**DIFFERENT OPINIONS**

There is a number of different opinions as to who were the two wives that cooperated against the Prophet (ﷺ), what is the thing that he prohibited upon himself, and what the secret was that one of them exposed. The following are the most common views found in the books of *tafsīr* and *Ḥadīth*:

1. The two wives were ʿĀ'ishah and Ḥafṣah; the thing that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited was eating honey at Zaynab's; the secret that he confided to ʿĀ'ishah was his oath of prohibiting the honey upon himself; ʿĀ'ishah exposed his secret to Ḥafṣah. This opinion is the strongest, and is the one presented above. It is supported by the reports of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others, and is further supported by ʿUmar's statement to Ibn ʿAbbās in the next section.

   There are other (weaker) reports, similar to the above one, specifying the wife who had the honey as Sawdah or Umm Salamah. [1]

2. The wives were three: ʿĀ'ishah, Sawdah, and Ṣafiyyah; the thing that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited was eating honey at Ḥafṣah's. When the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited the honey upon himself, Sawdah sympathized with him and said, "*Subḥān Allāh* (exalted is Allāh)! By Allāh we have denied him (of the honey)." But ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) hushed her, "Be quiet!" [2]. Some scholars hold the opinion that the narrators have mixed the names of the Mothers of the Believers. Others, such as Ibn Kathīr, see nothing wrong in assuming that both incidents (this and the above one) have truly occurred, but only one of them (the above one) was the cause for revealing the *āyāt*.

3. The two wives were ʿĀ'ishah and Ḥafṣah; the thing that the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited was approaching Māriyah; the secret that he confided to Ḥafṣah was his oath of prohibiting Māriyah upon himself; Ḥafṣah exposed his secret to ʿĀ'ishah.

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1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī, Ibn Saʿd, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (the Book of Divorce).

Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās, and Anas (ﷺ) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once had intercourse with Māriyah (ﷺ), the mother of his son Ibrāhīm, in Ḥafṣah 's house. Ḥafṣah accidentally saw them in her house and was upset. She said, "O Allāh's Messenger! Out of all your wives, you choose to do this in my house, on my bed, and during my day?" She told ʿĀ'ishah about that, and the two of them cooperated on urging the Prophet (ﷺ) to prohibit Māriyah for himself. He then promised Ḥafṣah never to approach Māriyah. He made an oath in that regard, and ordered Ḥafṣah not to tell anyone about it, but she told ʿĀ'ishah. [1]

This could be another authentic cause for the revelation of the above *āyāt*.

4. Except for one difference, this is similar to the previous story. In order to please Ḥafṣah, the Prophet (ﷺ) told her that her father will follow Abū Bakr as his successor, and asked her to keep that secret from ʿĀ'ishah, but she told her. This is an unauthentic narration [2].

Thus, the first and third opinions are the correct ones as to the cause for the revelation of the first five *āyāt* of *Sūrat ut-Taḥrīm*. The following table summarizes the above discussion:

| **Cooperating wives** | **Prohibited thing** | **Exposed Secret** | **Degree** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ʿĀ'ishah & Ḥafṣah | Zaynab's honey | Oath never to eat from it | Strongest |

1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mardawayh, and others. An-Nasā'ī's report from Anas is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ un-Nasā'ī* no. 3695). Ibn Kathīr indicated (in his *Tafsīr*) that al-Haytham Bin Kulayb's report from Ibn ʿUmar is authentic. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar indicated (in *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*) that the various *isnād*s of this *ḥadīth* strengthen each other, and mentioned another narration recorded by Saʿīd Bin Manṣūr with an authentic *isnād* to Masrūq (who is a *tābiʿī*), without mentioning a *ṣaḥābī* (i.e., *mursal*).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) from Ibn ʿAbbās. Verified to be weak by Ibn Kathīr (in his *Tafsīr*).

| Cooperating wives | Prohibited thing | Exposed Secret | Degree |
|---|---|---|---|
| ʿĀ'ishah, Sawdah & Ṣafiyyah | Ḥafṣah's honey | Oath never to eat from it | Strong |
| ʿĀ'ishah & Ḥafṣah | Approaching Māriyah | Oath never to approach her | Strong |
| ʿĀ'ishah & Ḥafṣah | Approaching Māriyah | The successorship of Abū Bakr & ʿUmar | Weak |

## The Prophet Deserts His Wives for One Month

### TEXT OF THE *ḤADĪTH*

Ibn ʿAbbās (ﷺ) reported that for a whole year he wanted to ask ʿUmar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb (ﷺ) about an *āyah*, but could not do that because of the feeling of awe that he had toward him. At one point, ʿUmar went out for *Ḥajj*, and he accompanied him. Along their return trip, they stopped for rest. ʿUmar went toward some *arāk* [1] bushes to relieve himself, and Ibn ʿAbbās waited for him with a pitcher of water. After he finished and came back, Ibn ʿAbbās poured water for ʿUmar, and he performed *wudū'*. Then he walked with him and said, "O Commander of the Believers! Who were the two of Allāh's Messenger's (ﷺ) wives who cooperated against him?" [2] He replied, "They were Ḥafṣah and ʿĀ'ishah. That was because of the secret that he entrusted to Ḥafṣah and she disclosed to ʿĀ'ishah, which resulted in his anger and decision to desert them — until Allāh admonished him."

Ibn ʿAbbās said, "By Allāh, I have wanted to ask you about this for a whole year, but could not because of my feeling of respect toward you." ʿUmar said, "Do not do that. If you expect that I have knowledge about a matter, ask me. If I know, I will tell you." Then

1 A desert tree from which the *miswāk*s are made.

2 He is referring to what is mentioned in *Surat ut-Taḥrīm* (66:1-5).

ʿUmar (ﷺ) told him the following:

> "By Allāh, during the time of *Jāhiliyyah*, we did not give any importance to women, until Allāh revealed in their regard what He revealed, and allocated for them what He did. And we, the Quraysh people, used to overcome our women, and did not allow them to interfere in our affairs. When we came to al-Madīnah, we found that the *Anṣār*'s women overcame them. So our women started learning some of the manners of the *Anṣār*'s women.
>
> One day I was doing something, and my wife argued with me and suggested, 'Why don't you do such and such?' I said, 'And what have you to do with this; and why do you interfere in my decisions?' She responded, 'I am amazed at you, O Son of al-Khaṭṭāb! You do not want to be questioned! By Allāh, the Prophet's (ﷺ) wives surely argue with him, and would sometimes desert him the whole day until the evening! And even your daughter surely argues with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) until she makes him angry for the rest of the day!' This shocked me, and I said, 'Anyone of them who does this is indeed a loser!'
>
> I then immediately wrapped myself in my garments and went to Ḥafṣah's house and said, 'O my daughter, indeed, do you argue with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) until he becomes angry for the rest of the day?' Ḥafṣah replied, 'Yes indeed, by Allāh, we do argue with him!' I said, 'Indeed, you must understand, you are lost and ruined (by that)! Do you feel secure of Allāh's anger and punishment when you disturb His Messenger? Daughter, do not argue with the Prophet (ﷺ) about anything, nor desert him, nor ask him too much — but ask me whatever you wish. And do not be misled by your co-wife who is prettier than you and more beloved by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)[1].'

1 He refers to ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

Then I left and went to Umm Salamah, to whom I am closely related, and spoke similarly to her. She replied, 'I am amazed at you, O Son of al-Khaṭṭāb! You want to interfere in everything — even between Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and his wives! Yes, by Allāh, we argue with him. If he allows that, he does not mind it; and if he forbids it, he would still be more lenient to us than you.' When she said that, she cooled some of my anger, and I left."

ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) continued:

"My house was among the dwellings of the tribe of Umayyah Bin Zayd in the district of al-ʿAwālī (al-Madīnah's heights). I had a neighbor from *al-Anṣār*. We used to take turns going to the Prophet (ﷺ) — He would go one day and I the other day. When I went, I would tell him of what happened on that day, of revelations or other things; and when he went, he would do the same.

There were rumors at that time that the Ghassān [1] tribe was preparing their horses to attack us, and our chests were filled with anxiety because of this. My neighbor went on the day that was his turn. In the evening, he came pounding hard on our door, yelling, 'Is he there?' I was terrified, and rushed out to him. He said, 'A very grave incident took place today!' I asked, 'What is it? Has the Ghassān attacked us?' He replied, 'No, it is even more grave and horrible. The Prophet (ﷺ) divorced his wives!' I said, 'Ḥafṣah and ʿĀ'ishah are then truly lost and ruined! I was expecting this to happen sooner or later.'

In the morning, I wrapped myself in my garments and went to pray the *fajr* prayer with the Prophet (ﷺ). After the prayer, the Prophet (ﷺ) entered into a room

1 A large Arabian tribe who mostly embraced Christianity and was supported by the Romans.

that he had above the *Masjid*'s level, with a (steep) stair made from a palm tree's trunk leading up to it. He stayed there in seclusion.

I went out (into the *Masjid*) and walked toward the *minbar*. I found around it a group of men sitting and (regretfully) playing with the pebbles, some of them weeping and exclaiming, 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has divorced his women!' I sat with them for a short while, and thought to myself, 'Today, I will find the truth in this regard.'

This happened prior to the command of *ḥijāb* that came to the Prophet's wives [1]. Feeling overwhelmed by emotion, I went to ʿĀ'ishah's house and said, 'O daughter of Abū Bakr! Has your position reached to that you would hurt Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)?' She replied, 'What have you to do with me, O son of al-Khaṭṭāb! Go deal with your own shame (i.e., your daughter).' I went into Ḥafṣah's house and found her weeping. I said, 'O Ḥafṣah! What makes you weep? Haven't I warned you of this? Has your position reached to that you would hurt Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)? You know that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) does not like you; and had it not been for me he would have divorced you.' She started weeping very hard. I asked, 'Did the Prophet (ﷺ) divorce all of you?' She replied, 'I do not know. There he is secluding himself in that loft.'

I stood beneath the Prophet's (ﷺ) loft. A black youth called Rabāḥ was guarding the door, sitting on the doorstep with his legs dangling down to the palm stair. I said to him, 'Seek permission for ʿUmar.' He went in, spoke to the Prophet (ﷺ), and came back saying, 'I spoke to the Prophet (ﷺ) and mentioned your request, but he remained silent.' So I went back and sat with the group who were by the *minbar*. I was again overwhelmed by emotion, so I went to the youth and said, 'Seek permission for ʿUmar.' He went in and

1 See *al-Aḥzāb* 53 and 59.

came back saying, 'I spoke to him and mentioned your request, but he remained silent.' So I went back and sat with the group by the *minbar*. I was again overwhelmed by emotion, so I went to the youth and raised my voice saying, 'O Rabāḥ! Seek permission for ʿUmar. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) may think that I came for the sake of Ḥafṣah; but by Allāh, if Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commands me to chop her head off, I will.' He motioned me to lower my voice, went in, and came back saying, 'I spoke to him and mentioned your request, but he remained silent.' As I started moving away, the youth called me and said, 'The Prophet (ﷺ) has given you permission to enter.'

I entered into the Prophet's (ﷺ) presence and found him lying on a straw mat — the straws leaving marks on his side. He was reclining on a leather pillow filled with luffa (rough fiberish plant). Still standing up, I gave him *Salām* and said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! Why should you be upset about women? If you have divorced them, then Allāh is on your side, and His angels, and Jibrīl and Mīkāʾīl, and I and Abū Bakr and the believers are on your side as well.' And rarely did I say a statement — praise be to Allāh — but hoped that Allāh would confirm my statement. So Allāh revealed:

﴿إِن تَتُوبَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ، وَإِن تَظَاهَرَا عَلَيْهِ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَـٰهُ ، وَجِبْرِيلُ ، وَصَـٰلِحُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ
بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ۝﴾ التحريم ٤

**«If you two (ʿĀʾishah and Ḥafṣah) repent to Allāh, (it is best), for your hearts have deviated. But if you cooperate against him — then indeed Allāh is his protector, and Jibrīl and the righteous of the believers and the angels, moreover, are his**

**supporters.»** [1]

And He (ﷻ) revealed:

﴿عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُۥٓ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبْدِلَهُۥٓ أَزْوَٰجًا خَيْرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسْلِمَٰتٍ مُّؤْمِنَٰتٍ قَٰنِتَٰتٍ تَٰٓئِبَٰتٍ عَٰبِدَٰتٍ سَٰٓئِحَٰتٍ ثَيِّبَٰتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا ۝﴾ التحريم ٥

**«Perhaps his Lord, if he divorced you (all), would substitute for him wives better than you — submitting (to Allāh), believing, devoutly obedient (to Allāh), repentant (o Allāh), worshiping (Allāh), and migrating (for Allāh's cause) — non-virgins and virgins.»** [2]

Then I asked him, 'O Allāh's Messenger! Have you divorced your wives?' He replied, «.لا» **‹No!›** I said, '*Allāhu Akbar*! O Allāh's Messenger, when I entered into the *Masjid* I saw the Muslims (regretfully) playing with the pebbles and exclaiming that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has divorced his wives. Should I go down and inform them that you did not?' He replied, «نعم، إن شئت.» **‹Yes, if you wish.›** So I rushed to the door leading to the *Masjid* and shouted as loud as I could, 'The Prophet (ﷺ) did not divorce his wives!' Also, the following *āyah* was revealed:

﴿ وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ. وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ مِنْهُمْ. وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝﴾ النساء ٨٣

**«And when there comes to them some information concerning security or fear, they spread it around. But if they had referred it back to the Messenger or**

1 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:4.

2 *At-Taḥrīm* 66:5.

**to those of authority among them, then the ones who can draw correct conclusions from it would have known it. And had it not been for Allāh's favor and mercy upon you, you would have followed Satan — except for a few (among you).»** [1]

And I was the one who was able to draw that correct answer.

Still standing, I tried to cheer the Prophet (ﷺ), 'O Allāh's Messenger! You should see how we, the Quraysh people, used to overcome our women. But when we came to al-Madīnah we found a people whose women overcame them. So our women started learning from their women. One day I became angry with my wife, and she started arguing with me. I disapproved of that. Her response was that, by Allāh, the Prophet's (ﷺ) wives surely argue with him, and would sometimes desert him a whole day until the evening! I then went and said to them, "Anyone of you who does that is indeed a ruined loser! How can any of you have security from Allāh's wrath when she disturbs His Messenger? That could surely bring her destruction."' The Prophet (ﷺ) smiled showing his teeth — and his smile was among the best of the people's. Then I said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! You should have seen me when I went to Ḥafṣah and said, "Do not be conceited because of your co-wife who is prettier and more beloved to the Prophet (ﷺ)." ' The Prophet (ﷺ) smiled a second time.

When I saw that, I sought his permission to sit and continue talking to him. He said, «نعم.» **‹Yes!›** I sat down and raised my eyes examining the contents of his dwelling. I only saw three half-tinted pieces of leather, and a handful of barley in a corner. I cried, and he asked me, «ما يبكيك يا ابن الخطاب؟» **‹O Son of al-Khaṭṭāb! What makes you cry?›** I said, 'How can I not cry

1 *An-Nisā'* 4:83.

when I see this mat leaving marks on your side, and your room as empty as it is? Why do Kisrā and Qayṣar (Caesar) enjoy rivers and fruits while you, Allāh's Messenger and His chosen one from among His creation, are in this tight living? O Allāh's Messenger! Supplicate to Allāh to ease the living of your *Ummah*, for the Persians and Romans have indeed been given ease of living and have been given the possessions of the worldly life, even though they do not worship Allāh.'

The Prophet (ﷺ) sat up from his recline and said:

«أوَفي هذا أنت؟ أفي شك أنت يا ٱبنَ الخطّاب؟ إن أولئك قومٌ عجلوا (أو عُجِّلت لهم) طيباتِهم في الحياة الدنيا.»

**‹Is this what concerns you? Do you have any doubt (about Allāh's promises), O Son of al-Khaṭṭāb? Those people have received their pleasure too soon — in this worldly life.›**

I said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! Ask Allāh to forgive me.'

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) then descended from the loft and I followed him. Whereas I was carefully holding to the palm trunk, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) descended (elegantly) as if he was walking on a flat surface, and without even touching the trunk.

Thus, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) abandoned his wives and remained in his seclusion for twenty-nine nights. He had vowed to desert them for a full month, saying, «ما أنا بداخل شهراً.» **‹I will not approach them for a full month.›** I asked him about that, 'O Allāh's Messenger, you remained in the loft only for twenty-nine nights.' He replied, «إن الشهر يكون تسعةً وعشرين يوماً.» **‹A month can be twenty-nine days.›**"[1]

1 This is a combined report recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**NOTES**

In the above narration, Ibn ʿAbbās asked ʿUmar about the two women who cooperated against the Prophet (ﷺ). He clearly indicated that they were Ḥafṣah and ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنهما). Then ʿUmar went on to mention another incident that led the Prophet (ﷺ) to desert his wives for a full month.

Thus it should be understood that ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) mentioned two different incidents.[1] He intertwined them because they had something in common: they both represented misbehavior by the Prophet's (ﷺ) wives toward him, and both resulted in revelations defending the Prophet (ﷺ) and reproaching the Mothers of the Believers. The second incident will be further detailed in the next section.

## A Difficult Choice?

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) chose to live a modest life, reserving his pleasures to the Hereafter. This is indicated in his words to ʿUmar in the previous section. It seems that he (ﷺ) saw signs of discontent from his wives, and that greatly distressed him.

**TEXT OF THE *ḤADĪTH***

Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Abū Bakr went to the Prophet's (ﷺ) house and sought permission to enter. There were many people sitting outside, none of them permitted to enter. Abū Bakr was admitted. ʿUmar then came, sought permission to enter, and was admitted. They found the Prophet (ﷺ) sitting in silence, with his wives around him. Abū Bakr decided to say something to cheer the Prophet (ﷺ), so he said, "O Allāh's Messenger! You should have seen when Bint Khārijah asked me for (additional) support: I was about to strike her neck."[2] Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) then smiled and said:

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1 See *Fatḥ ul-Qaḍīr* by ash-Shawkānī.

2 This expression is not always meant literally, but is often used to express a mere threat for misbehavior.

«هن حولي كما ترى، يسألنني النفقة.»

**‹Here they are — as you can see — around me, asking me for (additional) support.›**

So Abū Bakr jumped at ʿĀ'ishah to hit her, and ʿUmar jumped at Ḥafṣah, both of them saying, "How dare you ask Allāh's Messenger for that which he cannot afford?" They replied, "By Allāh, we are not asking Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) for anything he cannot afford."

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) then deserted his wives for a month (or twenty nine days), and Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ: "إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ۝ وَإِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ، فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا." ۝﴾ الأحزاب ٢٨-٢٩

**«O Prophet! Say to your wives, "If you should desire the worldly life and its adornment, then come, I will provide for you and give you a gracious release. But if you should desire Allāh and His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter — then indeed, Allāh has prepared for the doers of good among you a great reward.»** [1]

The Prophet (ﷺ) started by ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and said:

«يا عائشةُ، إني أريد أن أعرضَ عليكِ أمراً أحب

ألا تعجَلي فيه حتى تستشيري أبويك.»

**‹O ʿĀ'ishah! I want to propose something to you, and would like you not to hasten in your decision until you consult with your parents.›**

She asked, "What is it, O Allāh's Messenger?" And he recited to her

1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:28-29.

the above two *āyāt*. She said:

> "Do I need to consult my parents in regard to you, O Allāh's Messenger!? I surely choose Allāh, His Messenger, and the home of the Hereafter. I further request you not to tell any of your other wives about what I just said."

He replied:

«لا تسألُني امرأةٌ منهن إلا أخبرتُها. إن اللهَ لم يبعثني معنِّتاً ولا مُتعنِّتاً، ولكن بعثني مُعلِّماً مُيسِّراً.»

> **‹No woman among them would ask me but I will tell her. Indeed, Allāh did not send me as one who makes things hard for himself or others. Rather, He sent me as a teacher who facilitates things.›**

All of the other wives made the same choice as ʿĀ'ishah (ﷺ), and this pleased Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).[1]

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

# CHAPTER 6

# THE *ḤADĪTH* ABOUT UMM ZARʿ

## Chatting with One's Spouse

The following *ḥadīth* is the outcome of a chatting that took place between the Prophet (ﷺ) and his wife ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها). It is a good example of the private discussions that take place between a man and his wife. It tells about eleven women who got together, each of them briefly describing her husband's character to the other women.

Most reports of this *ḥadīth* present the story of the eleven women as being narrated by ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and not by the Prophet (ﷺ). However, some reports explicitly indicate that it was the Prophet (ﷺ) who told it to her [1].

Also, some scholars hold the position that the whole story is fictitious and was mentioned for the sake of the lessons that it carries. Others hold the more correct position that it is a true story that did take place during the time of *Jāhiliyyah*. This is explicitly mentioned in some of the reports, such as the one presented below.

ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her:

«يا عائشةُ، كُنتُ لكِ كأبي زرعٍ لأمِّ زرعٍ.»

**‹O ʿĀ'ishah! I am to you like Abū Zarʿ was to Umm Zarʿ.›** [2]

She inquired, "And who is Umm Zarʿ, O Allāh's Messenger?" He replied:

«اجتمع إحدى عشرةَ امرأةً في الجاهلية، فتعاقدن أن يتصادقن بينهنَّ، ولا يكتُمن من أخبار أزاوجِهن شيئاً.»

1 See the discussion in *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* no. 5189.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

**‹Eleven women got together during the times of *Jāhiliyyah*. They promised to tell each other the truth, and not to hide anything about their husbands.›**

It is clear that those women were not Muslim, and it is therefore not surprising that they would violate some of the well-known teachings of Islām, such as backbiting their husbands. Yet, their discussions bring to light many qualities that women like or dislike in their husbands.

## Disliked Qualities

The first few women said about their husbands things indicating their dissatisfaction with them.

### Miserliness and Arrogance

The first woman described her husband as being worthless, stingy, and arrogant. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«فقالت الأولى: "زوجي لحمُ جملٍ غَثٍّ، على رأس
جبلٍ وعْرٍ، لا سهلٍ فيُرتقى ، ولا سمينٍ فيُنتَقَل."»

**‹The first woman said, "My husband is (like) a bony camel's meat at the top of a rough mountain. Neither is it easy to reach, nor meaty to desire acquiring."›**

Thus, he is as worthless and miserly as a bony camel with very little meat, hence of trivial value. Furthermore, he is haughty, unfriendly, and unapproachable, as though he is located at the top of a rough mountain. No one would be interested in going to him, nor bringing him for any kind of benefit.

**NUMEROUS APPARENT AND HIDDEN PROBLEMS**

The second woman indicated that her husband possessed numerous defects — both apparent and hidden. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الثانية: "زوجي لا أبثُّ خبرَه، إني أخافُ
أن لا أذرَه. إن أذكُرْهُ، أذكرْ عُجَرَهُ وبُجَرَهُ."»

**‹The second woman said, "As for my husband, I cannot expose his secrets (fearing divorce). (If I start talking about him,) I fear that I will not be able to stop (because of his numerous shortcomings). And if I were to talk about him, I would mention the swelling in his neck-veins (i.e., arrogance, unfriendliness, and other apparent defects) and the swelling in his stomach and navel (i.e., many hidden defects).">**

In addition to his numerous defects, this man did not like criticism, and was ready to divorce his wife would she utter anything about his problems.

**EXCESSIVENESS AND UNIMPRESSIVENESS**

The third woman described her husband as being unimpressively out of proportion in his qualities (bodily, morally, or both). The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الثالثةُ: "زوجي العَشَنَّقُ. إن أنطِقْ أُطلَّقْ، وإن أسكُتْ أُعَلَّقْ."»

**‹The third woman said, "My husband is the one who is unreasonably tall (i.e., unimpressive). If I utter a word (about his defects, and he finds out), I will surely be divorced. And if I remain silent, I will be suspended (i.e., he neither treats me like a wife nor like a divorcee).">**

### SELFISHNESS, GREED, AND NEGLIGENCE

The fourth woman described her husband as being very greedy. He eats and drink, to the last bit, everything in front of him. He sleeps like a log, without caring about her, fulfilling his marital duty toward her, or investigating her situation and checking about her health. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الرابعةُ: "زوجي إن أكلَ لفَّ، وإن شرب ٱشْتَفَّ،
وإن ٱضْطَجَعَ ٱلتَفَّ. وَلا يُولجُ الكفَّ، ليَعْلَمَ البَثَّ."»

**‹The fourth woman said, "As for my husband, when he eats he encompasses (i.e., devours everything); when he drinks he finishes even the last drops; and when he sleeps he coils up in the covers (i.e., not caring about me). He does not extend his palm to investigate the grief (i.e., he does not have any concern about my situations of illness, sorrow, and so on)."›**

### HELPLESSNESS, STUPIDITY, AND ABUSE

The fifth woman's husband lacks all of the important qualities that would make a woman admire her husband. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الخامسةُ: "زوجي عَيَايَاءُ، طَبَاقَاءُ، كلُّ
داءٍ لهُ داءٌ. شَجَّكِ، أو فَلَّكِ، أو جَمَعَ كُلاًّ لكِ."»

**‹The fifth woman said, "My husband is extremely helpless (i.e., incapable and impotent) and stupid. Every disease applies to him. He would either cut your head, break one of your limbs, or do both to you (i.e., he hits the women without mercy)."›**

He is helpless in conducting his and his family's affairs, impotent and unable to please his wife, and stupid. All of the people's defects are combined in him. And, as though that is not enough, he is very

abusive towards his wife. He hits her without mercy, breaking her bones or wounding her head.

## Commendable Qualities

The next five women had good things to say about their husbands.

### Kindness, Security, and Caring

The sixth woman's husband is like a cool night breeze. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت السادسةُ: "زوجي كَلَيْلِ تِهامةَ،
لا حَرَّ ولا قَرَّ، ولا مَخافَةَ ولا سآمَةَ."»

**‹The sixth woman said, "As for my husband, he is like the night of Tihāmah (Makkah and its suburbs) — neither hot nor cold. (In his company) there is neither fear nor boredom."›**

He is kind and moderate in his actions, and his company does not bring fear or boredom. Rather, it gives her a feeling of security and friendliness.

### Love, Generosity, and Courage

The seventh woman's husband is well mannered and loving at home, and courageous and powerful outside his home. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت السابعةُ: "زَوجي إنْ دَخَلَ فَهِدَ،
وإنْ خَرَجَ أَسِدَ، ولا يَسْألُ عمَّا عَهِدَ."»

**‹The seventh woman said, "As for my husband, when he enters, he acts like a (sleepy) leopard; and when he leaves, he acts like a lion. He does not ask about what he entrusted."›**

Within the house, he is like a leopard: quiet, sleepy (i.e., forgiving), and loving. In dealing with the outside society, he is like a lion: courageous, powerful, and respected. When he entrusts his wife (or others) with something, he does not hold her strictly accountable for it; rather, he is generous and willing to overlook the mistakes.

#### GOOD REPUTATION, RESPECT, AND KINDNESS

The eighth woman's husband is very kind to her. At the same time, he is strong and assertive with other people. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الثامنةُ: "زوجي: المسُّ مَسُّ أرْنَب،
والريحُ ريحُ زَرْنَبٍ، وأنا أغلِبُهُ، والناسَ يَغلِبُ."»

**‹The eighth woman said, "As for my husband, his touch is like that of a rabbit, and his odor is like that of *zarnab* (aromatic plant). I overcome him, but he overcomes the other people."›**

With his wife, he has the soft and kind touch of a rabbit, and he has a most pleasant odor.

With other people, he has a good reputation (another meaning for the good odor), and his kindness and good attitude with his wife do not prevent him from being powerful and victorious with the other people.

#### WEALTH, COURAGE, GENEROSITY, AND STATURE

The ninth woman's husband is of a noble and wealthy family. He is a strong warrior and a generous host. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت التاسعةُ: "زوجي رَفيعُ العِمَادِ، طويلُ
النِّجَادِ، عَظِيمُ الرَّمَادِ، قَرِيبُ البَيتِ مِنَ النَادِ."»

**‹The ninth woman said, "As for my husband, he has high house-pillars, long sword-suspenders, and large amounts of ashes. His house is near the clubhouse."›**

The high house-pillars are an indication of his noble descent and wealth. The long sword-suspenders indicate that he is of large and impressive built and that he is a strong fighter. The ashes are an indication of his generosity and the many guests he feeds. Being in the vicinity of the clubhouse indicates that he is near the town-center where important people usually live and meet.

#### WEALTH, GENEROSITY, AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED QUALITIES

The tenth woman's husband has many excellent qualities that are beyond description. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت العاشرةُ: "زوجي مالكٌ، وما مالكٌ؟ مالكٌ خيرٌ من ذٰلك.
لهُ إبلٌ كثيراتُ المبارِكِ، قليلاتُ المسارِحِ؛ إذا سَمِعنَ صوتَ
المزاهِرِ أيقَنَّ أنهنَّ هَوَالِك.")»

**‹The tenth woman said, "My husband is Mālik (the owner). And what would you know about Mālik? Mālik is better than that (which I describe). He owns camels that are numerous in their sitting places, and few in the grazing areas. When they hear the sound of the lute, they become certain of their death."›**

This means that she is never able to give her husband the praise that he truly deserves. His camels, numerous though they are, are not allowed to graze far away from his residence, because he wants them ever-ready for his guests. He often holds banquets in which he entertains his guests with the lute and feeds them camel-meat.

## Umm Zarʿ and Her Two Husbands

The last woman to speak was Umm Zarʿ. She gave a fuller description of her two husbands: Abū Zarʿ and the man whom she married after Abū Zarʿ divorced her. Both of her husbands were good to her, but she was happier with the first, and gave a more detailed description of him

and his family members.

#### Abū Zar''s Kindness, Wealth, and Generosity

Abū Zarʿ took Umm Zarʿ from a life of poverty and hard work to a life of wealth and leisure. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued his story:

«قالت الحاديةُ عشْرةَ: "زوْجي أبو زَرْعٍ، وما أبو زرْعٍ؟ أَناسَ مِنْ حُليٍّ أُذُنَيَّ، ومَلأَ منْ شَحْمٍ عَضُدَيَّ، وبجَّحَني، فَبَجَحَتْ إليَّ نَفْسي. وَجَدَني في أهلِ غُنَيْمَةٍ بِشَقٍ، فجَعَلني في أهْلِ صَهيلٍ وأَطيطٍ ودائِسٍ ومُنَقٍّ، فعندهُ أقُولُ فلا أُقَبَّحُ، وأرقُدُ فَأَتَصَبَّحُ، وَأشرَبُ فَأَتَقَمَّحُ."»

**‹The eleventh said, "My husband was Abū Zarʿ (i.e., the one with vegetation) — and what would you know about Abū Zarʿ! He made my ears heavy with jewelry, filled my upper arms with flesh (i.e., fed me well after my previous state of hunger), and honored me until my soul was gratified. He took me from among a people with very few sheep and tight living, and placed me among a people who had horses, camels, cows (that step on the grains to peel them), and sieves (for sifting the grains). In his house, I spoke without being rebuffed, slept until late-morning, and drank my fill."›**

#### Abū Zar''s Mother

Abū Zarʿ's mother was a wealthy woman with ample provisions and many servants. This carries an additional praise for her son, because he made sure that his mother's needs were well met, and her living was no less than his. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"أُمُّ أبي زرْعٍ، وما أُمُّ أبي زرْعٍ؟ عُكومُها رَداحٌ، وبَيتُها فَسَاحٌ."»

**‹(She continued,) "Abū Zarʿ's mother — and what**

**would you know about Abū Zarʿ's mother! Her safes (of food and clothing) were plentiful, and her house was spacious."›**

#### ABŪ ZARʿ'S SON

Despite his father's wealth, Abū Zarʿ's son was not a spoiled young man. To the contrary, he was lean, content, ate moderately, and was ever alert, even while sleeping. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"ابنُ أبي زرْعٍ، وما ٱبنُ أبي زرْعٍ؟ مَضْجِعُهُ كَمَسَلِّ شَطْبَةٍ، وتُشْبِعُهُ ذِراعُ الجَفْرَةِ."»

**‹(She continued,) "Abū Zarʿ's son — and what would you know about Abū Zarʿ's son! His sleep was (sharp) like a pointed palm stick (i.e., ever-alert), and a female goat's arm satisfied his hunger (i.e., neither was he fat nor greedy)."›**

#### ABŪ ZARʿ'S DAUGHTER

Abū Zarʿ's daughter was a perfect young woman, obedient to both her parents, beautiful, and attractive. This graced her family, and brought envy to her co-wife. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"بنتُ أبي زرْعٍ وما بنتُ أبي زرْعٍ؟ طَوْعُ أَبيها، وطوْعُ أُمِّها، ومِلْءُ كِسائِهَا، وغَطْفُ رِدائِها، وزَيْنُ أَهلِها، وَغَيْظُ جَارَتِهَا."»

**‹(She continued,) "Abū Zarʿ's daughter — and what would you know about Abū Zarʿ's daughter! She was obedient to her father and obedient to her mother. She filled her garments (i.e., her body was full). She caused her upper garment to curve (her body was well-proportioned). She was the grace of her family, and the cause of envy to her co-wife."›**

### ABŪ ZAR'S MAID

Even the maid played a role in painting an impressive picture of dignity and praise for Abū Zarʿ! She was trustworthy, protective, and clean. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"جَارِيَةُ أبي زَرعٍ، وما جَارِيَة أبي زَرع؟ لا تَبُثُّ حَدِيثَنَا تَبْثِيثاً، ولا تَنْقُثُ مِيرَتَنا تَنْقِيثاً، ولا تملأُ بَيتَنا تَعْشِيشاً."»

**‹(She continued,) "Abū Zarʿ's maid — and what would you know about Abū Zarʿ's maid! She did not disclose our secrets, nor give away our food (i.e., she was trustworthy), nor let our house fill with dirt like a bird's nest (i.e., she was clean)."›**

### THE UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE

After spending many years with her, Abū Zarʿ decided one day to give up his wife Umm Zarʿ for a younger woman who had two young boys. The Prophet (ﷺ) continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"خَرجَ أبو زرعٍ والأَوْطابُ تُمْخَضُ، فَمَرَّ بِامْرَأةٍ مَعَها ٱبْنانِ لها كالفَهْدَين، يَلعَبانِ مِنْ تحتِ خَصْرِهَا بِرُمَّانَتينِ، فَطَلَّقَني، ونَكَحَهَا."»

**‹(She continued,) "Abū Zarʿ went on a trip at the time when the milk jars were shaken to extract the cream (i.e., in the spring when there was plenty of milk). He met a woman with two little sons as (active as) two leopard cubs. They were (jumping) under her waist and playing with two pomegranates (i.e., she was young and had small breasts). He divorced me and married her."›**

### THE SECOND HUSBAND

Umm Zarʿ's second husband was also wealthy and very good to her. But her heart remained with her first husband. The Prophet (ﷺ)

continued relating what Umm Zarʿ said:

«"فَنَكَحْتُ بَعْدَهُ رَجُلاً سَرِيًّا، رَكِبَ شَرِيًّا، وأَخَذَ خَطِّيًّا، وأَرَاحَ عَلَيَّ نَعَماً ثَرِيًّا، وَأَعْطَانِي مِنْ كلِّ رَائِحَةٍ زَوْجًا، وَقَالَ: "كُلِي أُمَّ زَرْعٍ، ومِيرِي أَهْلَكِ." فَلَوْ جَمَعْتُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَعْطَانِيهِ، ما مَلأَ أَصغَرَ إِناءٍ مِنْ آنِيَةِ أَبِي زَرْعٍ."»

**‹(She continued,) "I married after him a noble man. He rode a fast horse and grasped a spear (he was a fighter). He brought to me in the evenings (after his battles) expensive cattle, and granted me a pair from every kind of it. He said to me, 'Eat, O Umm Zarʿ, and give your relatives as well.' Yet, were I to gather all the things that he gave me, they would not fill the smallest of Abū Zarʿ's containers."›**

## Conclusion

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) concluded by again telling ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that he was to her like Abū Zarʿ was to Umm Zarʿ.

«يا عائشةُ، كُنتُ لكِ كأبي زرعٍ لأُمِّ زرعٍ، إلاَّ أنَّ أبا زرعٍ طَلَّقَ، وأنا لا أُطَلِّقُ.»

**‹O ʿĀ'ishah! I am to you like Abū Zarʿ was to Umm Zarʿ — except that Abū Zarʿ divorced (her), and I will not divorce (you).›** [1]

This means that he was bountiful towards her like Abū Zarʿ was towards Umm Zarʿ. However, the Prophet's (ﷺ) favors on ʿĀ'ishah (or any other Muslim) are beyond measure, and they extend to the good and eternal bliss of the Hereafter. This is why ʿĀ'ishah (رضي الله عنها)

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

responded:

> "O Allāh's Messenger! You are better to me than Abū Zarʿ was to Umm Zarʿ." [1]

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī.

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# ARABIC TERMS

A number of Arabic terms are frequently used in Islāmic discussions, and seem to constitute a basic vocabulary that needs to be available to the readers of most books on Islām. We attempt to provide such terms, together with their definitions, in the following "Glossary" section. Other terms pertinent to the current book are included in the "Index" section, together with a page-reference indicating where they are defined in this book.

## A: Glossary of Common Terms

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *ʿAbd* | Slave or servant. In reference to Allāh (ﷻ), it usually means a devout worshiper (as in ʿAbd Ullāh). But it frequently refers to a "human being" because every human being is subdued by Allāh (ﷻ) whether one admits it or not. Plural: *ʿibād* or *ʿabīd*. |
| *Adab* | Good characters or manners; etiquettes. Plural: *Ādāb*. |
| *Al-Fātiḥah* | The first chapter of the Qurʾān. |
| *ʿĀlim* | A scholar or learned man in Islām. |
| *ʿAllāmah* | Exaggerated form of "*ʿālim*". |
| *Āmīn* | Means, "O Allāh, answer my supplication." |
| *Anṣār* | "The Supporters": the residents of al-Madīnah who supported the Prophet (ﷺ) and the *muhājirūn*. |
| *ʿAṣr* | Afternoon. It is usually applied to the third daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from when the shadows are as long as the objects until sunset. |
| *Aṯhān* | Call to the prayer. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *ʿAwrah* | A weakness that needs covering or protection. In *fiqh*: the body-parts that must be covered from others. |
| *Āyah* | Literally means a miracle and a sign. The Qurʾān is a miracle in itself, and so is any portion of it. The smallest subdivision of the Qurʾānic text is thus called an *āyah*. An *āyah* is usually one sentence in length, but is sometimes longer or shorter than a complete sentence. The plural of *āyah* is *āyāt*. |
| *Āyāt* | Plural of *āyah*. |
| *Biḍʿah* | Innovation in the creed or in acts of worship. |
| *Daʿwah* | Call or mission. |
| *Dīn* | Religion — usually used in reference to the religion of Islām. |
| *Dīnār* | A valuable old currency that was made of gold. |
| *Dirham* | A low-value old currency that was made of silver or copper. |
| *Duʿāʾ* | Supplication. |
| *Fajr* | Dawn. It usually applies to the first daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from dawn until sunrise. |
| *Farḍ* | Obligation. |
| *Farḍ Kifāyah* | A communal obligation; at least a few Muslims should perform it; if none does, all Muslims are considered sinful. Ex., specializing in Islāmic Jurisprudence. |
| *Farḍ ʿAyn* | An individual obligation, i.e., an obligation that each individual must fulfill. Ex., Prayer. |
| *Fatwā* | A religious verdict; plural: *fatāwā* or *fatāwī*. |
| *Fiqh* | The ability to understand and derive conclusions from the available evidence. It is often applied to the subject of "Islāmic jurisprudence" that deals with the practical regulations in Islām. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Fitnah* | Trial, test, temptation, or affliction. |
| *Ghayb* | All knowledge that is beyond the reach of human perception. |
| *Ghusl* | A ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, and after a woman becomes clean from her menses. |
| *Ḥadīth* | Reports of the Prophet's (ﷺ) sayings, actions, and tacit approvals. |
| *Ḥajj* | Major pilgrimage to Makkah. |
| *Ḥalāl* | Permissible. |
| *Ḥalqah* | A circle or ring. It normally refers to a study circle. |
| *Ḥarām* | Prohibited. |
| *Ḥasan* | Good or acceptable. This is usually mentioned when indicating the degree of authenticity of some reports. |
| *Hilāl* | Crescent |
| *Ḥijāb* | Cover. It usually refers to a woman's clothing that covers all of her body except her face and hands. |
| *Hijrah* | Migration. It usually refers to the Prophet's (ﷺ) migration from Makkah to al-Madīnah. |
| *ʿĪd* | Festival. Plural: *aʿyād*. There are two annual *ʿīd*s (*al-fiṭr* and *al-Aḍḥā*) and one weekly *ʿīd* (the day of *Jumuʿah*). |
| *Ijmāʿ* | Consensus of the scholars. |
| *Ijtihād* | Exerting *juhd* (maximum possible effort) to reach the right conclusion based on the available evidence. |
| *Imām* | A leader or distinguished Islāmic scholar. It is often applied to the leader of prayer. |
| *Īmān* | Faith or belief. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *ʿIshāʾ* | Night. It is usually applied to the fifth and last daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the disappearance of the red light in the horizon until the middle of the night (which is half way between sunset and dawn). |
| *Isnād* | Chain of narrators of a *ḥadīth*. |
| *Jāhiliyyah* | The era of extreme ignorance (*jahl*) and disbelief that preceded the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). |
| *Jamāʿah* | A Muslim congregation or gathering. It is often applied to the congregational prayers. *Al-Jamāʿah* (the *Jamāʿah*) refers to the original community of the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers through time. |
| *Janāzah* | A funeral or a deceased's prepared body. |
| *Jannah* | The Garden (of paradise). |
| *Jihād* | Striving or fighting for Allāh's cause. |
| *Jinn* | An invisible creation that Allāh (ﷻ) made from fire and smoke, sometimes translated as "demon". Satan is one of the *jinn*s. |
| *Jumuʿah* | Friday. It also applies to the Friday prayer. |
| *Kāfir* | A person who practices *kufr*. Plural: "*kuffār*". |
| *Khalīfah* | Successor. It commonly refers to a Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ) in leading the Muslims. Plural: *khulafāʾ*. |
| *Khamr* | Alcoholic beverages. |
| *Khilāfah* | Successorship. It usually refers to the period of rule of a *khalīfah*. |
| *Kufr* | Disbelief or rejection of faith. |
| *Khuṭbah* | Speech or sermon. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Maghrib* | Sunset. It is usually applied to the fourth daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from sunset until the red light disappears from the horizon. |
| *Makrūh* | An act that is disapproved in Islām. |
| *Maḥram* | A man who is closely related to a woman such that he is permanently prohibited from marrying her. This relationship results from ties of blood, suckling, or marriage. *Maḥrams* include: father, grandfathers, sons, grandsons, brothers, paternal and maternal uncles, nephews, father-in-law, sons-in-law, suckling sons, and suckling brothers. Examples of non-*maḥrams*: first cousins, step brothers, and brothers-in-law. |
| *Masjid* | Place designated for *sujūd;* mosque. |
| *Mathhab* | Way or approach. It usually refers to one of the four Islāmic schools of *fiqh* established by the Four *Imāms*: Abū Ḥanīfah an-Nuʿmān Bin Thābit, Mālik Bin Anas, Muḥammad Bin Idrīs ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal — May Allāh bestow His mercy on them all. |
| *Minbar* | Steps (normally three) mounted by an *imām* in a *masjid* for delivering a *khuṭbah.* |
| *Muhājir* | A migrator — one who undertakes *hijrah.* Plural: *muhājirūn* or *muhājirīn.* It usually refers to a *ṣaḥābī* who migrated from Makkah to al-Madīnah. |
| *Mujāhid* | A person who performs *jihād.* Plural: *mujāhidūn* or *mujāhidīn.* |
| *Munkar* | Disapproved; rejected. |
| *Muṣallā* | A place designated for prayer. It is sometimes applied to the grounds where the prayers of *ʿīd* and *janāzah* are performed. |
| *Mushrik* | A person who practices *shirk.* |
| *Nafl* | Extra, voluntary, or supererogatory deeds. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Qadar* | Allāh's decree and measure. |
| *Qiblah* | The direction of al-Kaʿbah in Makkah. |
| *Qiyām* | Literally means standing. It usually refers to the night prayer (because it includes long standing and recitation). |
| *Qudusī* | Holy. A *qudusī ḥadīth* is a *ḥadīth* that the Prophet (ﷺ) quoted from his Lord (ﷻ). |
| *Rakʿah* | A full prayer unit, containing one *rukūʿ*. Plural: *rakʿāt*. |
| *Rukūʿ* | The act of bowing in the prayer. It derives from the verb *rakaʿa* which means "bowed down". |
| *Ṣadaqah* | Charity. |
| *Ṣaḥābah* | The Prophet's companions; singular: *ṣaḥābī*. |
| *Ṣaḥīḥ* | True or authentic. |
| *Salaf* | The early righteous pioneers and scholars of Islām—the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers. |
| *Ṣalāh* | Prayer. |
| *Salām* | Peace. It also means the greeting with peace (*as-salāmu ʿalaykum*) among the Muslims. |
| *Sanad* | Same as *isnād*. |
| *Shahādah* | Testimony; it is mostly applied to the testimony of Islām: "There is no true god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger." Also, it is often applied to martyrdom in Allāh's (ﷻ) cause. |
| *Shahīd* | A person martyred for Allāh's cause. Feminine: *Shahīdah*. |
| Shām | General Middle-East area of Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, including the major cities of Jerusalem and Damascus. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Shar'* or *Shari'ah* | Derived from *shara'a*, which means "legislated". They are usually used in reference to the Islāmic Law. "*Shar'ī*" means a legislated or permissible matter in Islām. And "*ash-Shāri'*" is the Legislator: Allāh (ﷻ). |
| *Shaykh* | Literally: an old man. It is commonly used as a title of respect for a man with some level of Islāmic knowledge. |
| *Shayṭān* | Satan. |
| *Shirk* | Polytheism, ascribing divinity to other than Allāh, or joining partners with Him in worship. A pagan or a person who practices *shirk* is a *mushrik*. |
| *Ṣiyām* | Fasting. |
| *Sujūd* | The act of prostration in the prayer. |
| Sunnah | Way, guidance, or teachings. Most commonly, it refers to the Prophet's (ﷺ) way and guidance. |
| *Sūrah* | Qur'ānic chapter. |
| *Tābi'ī* | Literally, follower. It normally refers to a student of the *ṣaḥābah*. Plural: *tābi'ūn* or *tābi'īn*. |
| *Tafsīr* | Qur'ānic commentaries and interpretations. |
| *Takbīr* | Saying, "*Allāhu Akbar* — Allāh is the greatest." |
| *Tahlīl* | Saying, "*Lā ilāha illallāh* — There is no true god except Allāh." |
| *Taqlīd* | Imitation, especially without knowledge. |
| *Taqwā* | Fearing and revering Allāh. |
| *Tasbīḥ* | Saying, "*Subḥān Allāh* — Exalted is Allāh." |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Tashahhud* | Pronouncing the *Shahādah*. It is mostly applied to the part of the prayer where one sits, pronounces the *Shahādah*, invokes *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger, and supplicates. |
| *Tayammum* | A symbolic ablution performed by wiping clean dust, instead of water, over the hands (to the wrists) and face. |
| *Taslīm* | Saying *salām*, especially to conclude the prayer. |
| *Ṭawāf* | Circumambulation around the Kaʿbah. |
| *Tawḥīd* | Belief that Allāh: (a) is the only Creator and Lord of the universe, (b) is the only God who deserves to be worshiped, and (c) possesses the most excellent and perfect attributes. |
| *Thikr* | Remembering Allāh and mentioning Him. |
| *ʿUlamā'* | Plural of "*ālim*". |
| *Ummah* | Community, nation, or followers. |
| *ʿUmrah* | A minor form of pilgrimage to Makkah that may be performed at any time of the year. |
| *Waḥy* | Revelation or inspiration. |
| *Wājib* | Obligatory or required. |
| *Witr* | Odd numbered. The entire night prayer is sometimes called *witr* because the total number of its *rakʿāt* is odd. |
| *Wuḍū'* | Ablution for the prayer. It consists of rinsing the mouth, blowing the nose, washing the face, washing the forearms to the elbows, wiping over the head (including the ears), and washing the feet up to the ankles. |
| *Zakāh* | Obligatory charity. |
| *Zinā* | Adultery or fornication. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| *Ẓuhr* | Noon. It usually refers to the second daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the sun's crossing the zenith until when the shadows are as long as the objects. |

## B. Arabic Weekdays and Islāmic *Hijrī* Months

| | Weekday | Arabic Name | اليَوْم |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Friday | *Al-Jumu'ah* | الجُمُعَة |
| 2 | Saturday | *As-Sabt* | السَّبْت |
| 3 | Sunday | *Al-Aḥad* | الأَحَد |
| 4 | Monday | *Al-Ithnayn* | الإِثْنَيْن |
| 5 | Tuesday | *Ath-Thulāthā'* | الثُّلاثاء |
| 6 | Wednesday | *Al-Arbu'ā'* | الأَرْبِعاء |
| 7 | Thursday | *Al-Khamīs* | الخَمِيس |

| | Lunar Month | الشَّهْر |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | *Muḥarram* | مُحَرَّم |
| 2 | *Ṣafar* | صَفَر |
| 3 | *Rabī' al-Awwal* | رَبِيع أَوَّل |
| 4 | *Rabī' al-Ākhir* | رَبِيع الآخِر |
| 5 | *Jumāda Ūlā* | جُمادى الأُولى |
| 6 | *Jumāda Ākhirah* | جُمادى الآخِرة |

| | Lunar Month | الشَّهْر |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | *Rajab* | رَجَب |
| 8 | *Sha'bān* | شَعْبان |
| 9 | *Ramaḍān* | رَمَضان |
| 10 | *Shawwāl* | شَوَّال |
| 11 | *Thul-Qa'dah* | ذُو القَعْدَة |
| 12 | *Thul-Ḥijjah* | ذُو الحِجَّة |

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ISBN 189122953-2

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Printed in Lebanon

منشورات الكتاب والسنة
Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing